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The Customs Superstitions and Legends of the County of Somerset

C. H. POOLE

Somerset & 62

The Customs, Superstitions, and Legends

OF

THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

The Customs, Superstitions, and Legends

OF THE

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

COLLECTED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

BY

CHARLES HENRY POOLE,

B.L., F.R.S.L., F.R. Hiſt. Soc., F.G.S.,

Aſſociate of the Britiſh Archæological Aſſociation, Member of the Engliſh Dialect Society, Member of the Low-German Dialect Society of Hamburgh, Member of the Briſtol and Glouceſterſhire Archæological Society, &c., &c.

" Equidem plura tranſcribo, quam credo.
Nam nec affirmare ſuſtineo, de quibus dubito:
Nec ſubducere, quae acceſſi."—*Q. Curtii*, lib. ix.

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THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

TO

RICHARD KING MEADE KING, ESQUIRE, J.P., D.L.,

AS A SMALL TOKEN OF RESPECT AND ESTEEM,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

ERRATA.

Page 10, line 3, *for* "*Antiquarium*," *read* "*Antiquarian*."
„ 46, „ 1, *for* "XXI," *read* "XXII."
„ „ „ 2, *for* "1819," *read* "1820."

PREFACE.

THIS work does not profeſs to be a complete collection of our Local Somerſetſhire Legends, for every writer on the ſubject muſt be aware of the difficulties of the taſk. However, I have endeavoured to render the firſt attempt of bringing together into one volume ſome memorials of by-gone days, as complete as poſſible, nearly a thouſand volumes having been conſulted, including works inacceſſible to general readers. It may ſeem ſtrange to write on a ſubject which cannot be rendered perfect or complete; my apology is that of Abulfeda: "What cannot be totally known, ought not to be totally neglected; for the knowledge of a part is better than the ignorance of the whole."

C. H. P.

" Mos pro lege.
Moribus antiquis ſtat Roma.
Homo ſum, humani nihil à me alienum puto."

CUSTOMS.

Christmas.

THE "WAITS" whoſe muſic now is heard only at this feſtive ſeaſon, are the deſcendants of the ſongſters who lived in the muſical times of England, and traverſed the country diſperſing ſweet melody, enlivening the "watches" of the night, even though ſnow was on the ground. They, however, came in for their ſhare of abuſe, for we find in *The Ship of Fools*, a deſcription of the "vagabonds" whoſe crime is ſo great:

> "That by no means can they abide, ne dwell,
> Within their houſes, but out they need muſt go;
> More wildly wandering than either buck or doe,
> Some with their harps, another with his lute,
> Another with his bag-pipe, or a fooliſh flute."

In another paragraph Barclay gives vent to his wrath, the winter minſtrels coming in for a ſhare of it:

"But yet moreover theſe *fools*, are ſo unwiſe,
That in cold winter they use the ſame madneſs;
When all the houſes are lade with ſnow and ice,
O, madmen amaſed, unſtable and witleſs!
What pleaſure take you in this your fooliſhneſs,
What joy have ye to wander thus by night,
Save that ill doers, alway hate the light?"

The "fools" of this Benedictine ſatiriſt did not receive payment — later, the aſpect of things was changed, for we find them divided into two parties, thoſe who paid and thoſe who received payment. Beaumont and Fletcher deemed the performance of the unpaid as anything but muſical:

"*Jac.* Hark! are the waits abroad?
Fab. Be ſofter, prithee;
'Tis private muſic.
Jac. What a din it makes!
I'd rather hear a Jew's trump than theſe lutes;
They cry like ſchool boys."

The Waits had, however, formed a part of city pageantry, and as time went on, deſtroying antiquated cuſtoms with its ruthleſs hand, they with poetry loſt their honours and abiding place, and came at laſt to be heard only at Chriſtmaſtide. The laſt trace I can find of them as the folk of all weathers, is at Nottingham in 1710.*

* Vide *Tatler* 222.

"WASSAILING" is ſtill maintained, and holds its own in our county, proclaiming to us the hiſtorical fact that when Hengiſt and Horſa firſt viſited this land, at the inſtigation of Vortigern, Prince of the Silures, the chief became enamoured of Rowena, the niece of Hengiſt. At a feaſt given by the latter in honour of Vortigern, Rowena preſented a cup of ſpiced wine to the aged Prince, ſaying, at the ſame time, "Waes-heal," be of health; to which he anſwered, "Drinc-heal," "I drink your health." Robert of Glouceſter* thus narrates the event:

"And cuſte hire, and ſette hire a doun, and glad dronk hire hail.
And that was lo! in this lond the firſte vaſſayl,
As in langage of Saxonie, that me mygte euer y wyte," etc.

A paraphraſe of this paſſage occurs in the *Antiquarian Repertory:*

"'Health, my Lord King!'" the ſweet Rowena ſaid,
'Health!' cried the chieftain to the Saxon maid;
Then gaily roſe, and 'mid the concourſe wide;
Kiſſed her hale lips and placed her by his ſide."

Waeſ-heal, from this period, became the name of the drinking cups of the Saxons in their entertainments. Weſſell, Waſſall, Waſſell. Waſhaile bowls are only

* From the MS. in the Harleian Library, edited by T. Hearne, 1724.

variations of Waeſ-heal or Wiſh-health bowls. Drinking parties were called Waſſels—the jovial crew—Waſſailers. The common liquors at theſe carouſals were either beer, mead, or wine, when they could get it; theſe they drank out of earthen or wooden pitchers, or elſe out of the horns of wild bulls. The principal perſon, like the hoſt at a college breakfaſt, firſt drank, and then riſing up, ſaluted by name him who ſat next; then, the goblet being refilled to the brim, was preſented to the one ſaluted. I might add that the cuſtom of drinking to the memory of departed perſons is derived from the Scandinavians, who were accuſtomed to drink to the manes of their heroes; the practice was ſo firmly rooted that it required the ſtrongeſt efforts of the firſt miſſionaries to the Scandinavians to ſtop it. A peruſal of the ſtatutes mentioned by Bartholin, enacted in the thirteenth century, is intereſting. I ſelect one, as ſhowing the *ſobriety* of thoſe times:

"Si quis pro ebrietate ceciderit in ipſa domo convivii; vel antequam propriam curiam intraverit, Oram perſolvat."

However, good came out of evil, for it was at theſe feasts that guilds were formed (*gjalda*, to ſubſcribe to),

and ſo laid the foundation from which the modern clubs and city companies, with of courſe many modifications, derived their origin.

"MUMMING," a relic of the old Roman Saturnalia, conſiſts in perſons concealing their appearance, and performing a drama which embodies the time-honoured legend of S. George and the Dragon, with many whimſical adjuncts, winding up with appeals for money, couched in rude verſe, *e. g.*,

"Here I am, little man Jan,
With my zword in my hand,
If you dont all do
As you be told by I,
I'll ſend ye all to York
Vor to make apple pie."

Or—

"Ladies and gentlemen,
Our ſtory is ended,
Our money-box is recommended;
Five or ſix ſhillings will not do us harm,
Silver or copper, or gold if you can."

"KISSING UNDER THE MISTLETOE." The aſſociations cluſtering around the miſtletoe have not been obliterated in England by the dominion of the Romans, Jutes, Saxons, or Angles. This cuſtom of kiſſing at Chriſtmastide under the ſacred plant of the Druids, undoubtedly is the oldeſt exiſting in England. A

branch of the ſacred plant is ſuſpended from the ceiling in the houſes of the people, and any one of the fair ſex paſſing beneath is caught and kiſſed by any ruſtic, who chooſes to avail himſelf of the privilege. Although this innocent game is a relic of ſome Scandinavian practice, yet Iceland once paſſed laws, and very ſevere ones too, againſt it; and even if the laſs conſented, the law demanded three marks. This penalty would have pleaſed, I ſhould think, even the grim Puritans of the Protectorate, who endeavoured to eradicate every innocent and pleaſing cuſtom, and cruſh that mirth which God intended His creatures to enjoy.

The Burning of the Ashen-Faggot on Christmas Eve is an ancient ceremony tranſmitted to us from the Scandinavians, who, at their feaſt of Juul, were accuſtomed to kindle huge bonfires in honour of Thor. The faggot is compoſed of aſhen ſticks, hooped round with bands of the ſame tree, nine in number. When placed on the fire, fun and jollity commence—master and ſervant are now all on an equal footing. Sports begin—jumping in ſacks, diving in the water for apples, and many other innocent games engage the attention of the ruſtics. Every time the bands crack

by reaſon of the heat of the fire, all preſent are ſuppoſed to drink liberally of cider or egg-hot, a mixture of cider, eggs, &c. The reaſon why aſh is ſelected in preference to any other timber is, that tradition aſſigns it as the wood with which Our Lady kindled a fire in order to waſh her new-born SON. In ſome places it is cuſtomary for the yeoman and his family to proceed to the orchard, one of the party bearing a hot cake and cider, as an offering to the beſt bearing apple-tree, and after depoſiting the cake on the tree, the cider is poured on the latter, amid the firing off of guns and piſtols, the women and children ſhouting—

> "Bear blue, apples and pears enough,
> Barns full, bags full, ſacks full.
> Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!"

At Chriſtmas-time a peculiar cuſtom was until recently obſerved at North Curry, in memory of King John, the murderer of Prince Arthur. A feaſt was held at the reeve's houſe, the chief diſh among the paſtry being a huge mince-pie, ornamented with a rude effigy of the King; two candles, weighing a pound each, were lighted at the time of the entertainment, and, while they were burning, the viſitors at the feſtive

board had a right to regale themſelves with "jolly good ale and old" *ad libitum.* A marble tablet in the veſtry records the ſacred cuſtom once obſerved. The cuſtom of Evergreen-decking at Chriſtmas is ſtill maintained in Somerſetſhire, for

> "From every hedge is pluck'd by eager hands
> The holly branch with prickly leaves replete,
> And fraught with berries of a crimſon hue;
> Which, torn aſunder from its parent trunk,
> Is ſtraightway taken to the neighbouring towns,
> Where windows, mantels, candleſticks, and ſhelves,
> Quarts, pints, decanters, pipkins, baſons, jugs,
> And other articles of houſehold ware,
> The verdant garb confeſs."

The oxen are ſuppoſed to kneel at this gladſome ſeaſon, in adoration of Our LORD, on the eve of the nativity. This tradition is not confined to England, but exiſts in Germany. No ſatisfactory reaſon can be given; one has been attempted, and is to the effect that in old pictures of the nativity, the cattle were repreſented with bended knee in the ſtable of Bethlehem.

—oo—

New Year's Day.

OPENING THE BIBLE on this day is a practice ſtill in uſe in ſome parts of Somerſet, and much credit is

attached to it. It is uſually ſet about with ſome little ſolemnity before breakfaſt. The Holy Book is laid on the table unopened, and the parties who wiſh to conſult it open it in ſucceſſion. They are not allowed to chooſe any particular part of the book, but muſt open it at random. In whatever portion of the ſacred volume this may happen to be, the inquirer is to place his finger on any chapter contained in the two open pages, but without peruſing its contents. This portion of Scripture is then read aloud, and commented on by the people aſſembled, and from it they form their concluſions as to the happineſs or miſery that will enſue during the coming year. This cuſtom of divining the future was practiſed by the early Chriſtians, and in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* is an account of Clovis proceeding to Tours to pray at the ſhrine of S. Martin. His meſſengers were inſtructed to notice the words of the Pſalm which ſhould happen to be chanted at the exact moment when they entered the church; as they came into the cathedral, it happened that the Pſalm expreſſed the valour of the champions of the Iſraelites, which was an earneſt of the ſucceſs for the king's arms.

Brand, in his *Popular Antiquities*, gives ſome tales illuſtrating the ſortes Homericæ, ſortes Virgilianæ, and Bible omens (Bohn's *Antiquarium Library*, vol. iii). Probably S. Auguſtine's motto, "Tolle, lege," may have ſome reference to this cuſtom.

Pancake Day or Shrove Tuesday.

"Let glad Shrove Tueſday bring the pancake thin,
Or fritter rich, with apples ſtored within."— *Oxford Sauſage.*

PANCAKES are ſtill eaten on this day in memory of the Shrovetide of ancient times, when our anceſtors prepared themſelves for the auſterities of Lent.

Boys travel about the towns and villages ſhouting:

"Tippety, tippety toe;
Give me a pancake and then I'll go."

If the lady of the houſe fails to ſee the neceſſity of ſo doing a ſtone is affixed to the handle of the door.

Easter Day.

ON this day, the queen of the feſtivals, a beautiful cuſtom is obſerved by ſome ruſtics going to the ſummit of the neareſt mound, and waiting for the

ſun to riſe; this is done to procure proſperity in their undertakings until the next Eaſtertide ſhall come again. Even ſome of the pariſh churches are taſtefully decorated on this day to teach us the ſolemn truth of the Reſurrection by emblems.

Rogation Week.

THE practice of "Proceſſioning," "Beating the Bounds," or "Gangdays," is of ancient date, and is ſtill preſerved in many pariſhes.

> "That ev'ry man might keep his own poſſeſſions,
> Our fathers uſ'd in reverend proceſſions,
> (With zealous prayers, and with praiſeful cheere)
> To walk their pariſh limits once a yeare."

May Day.

IN ancient times it was cuſtomary for perſons of all ranks to go out a Maying. A friend, the Rev. R. A. Taylor, writes to me as follows: "On Clifton Downs, yearly, there is a meeting of thoſe who go a 'Maying.'" May is conſidered as the boundary-day that divided the confines of winter and ſummer,

alluſively to which there was inſtituted a ſportful war between two parties: the one in defence of the continuation of winter, the other for bringing in the ſummer. The youths were divided into troops, the one in winter livery, the other in the gay habit of the ſpring. The mock battle was always fought for booty. The ſpring was ſure to obtain the victory, which they celebrated by carrying triumphantly green branches with May flowers, proclaiming and ſinging the song of joy, of which the burden was in theſe or equivalent terms: "We have brought the ſummer home." Many imagine that the inſtitution of this feſtival originated from the Roman Floralia, or the Celtic La Beltine; others, among whom was Olaus, conjecture, that it was derived from our Gothic anceſtors, who fought the Southern Swedes in a mock battle, the one perſonifying the ſummer, the other the winter. This cuſtom is ſtill maintained in the Iſle of Man, where the Danes and Norwegians had for a long time held ſway. The cuſtoms of May, as ſetting up the May-pole, dancing round it, trimming the houſe with branches of trees for good luck, have loſt their hold on our people in this buſy age, even in ruſtic Somerſet.

"No more the May-pole's verdant height around,
To valour's games th' ambitious youths advance;
No merry bells and labor's ſprightly ſound
Wake the loud carol and the ſportive dance."

A relic of the hobby-horſe ſtill exiſts at Dunſter; many conjectures as to its origin have been given: one aſſerting that the famous hobby-horſe was the ancient King of May, another that it was a religious fracas long ago, in which one party trounced the other; and, even until recently, it ſeems to have been not unuſual for thoſe connected with the hobby-horſe to catch hold of ſome luckleſs wight and give him a drubbing.

The Firſt of May, fifty or ſixty years ago, was a "high day" at Minehead. The ancient town was paraded the evening before, as a reminder to the inhabitants of what was to take place on the morrow. At early dawn the ſleepers were arouſed by the beating of a great drum, whereupon they betook themſelves to a croſs-road, a little outſide Minehead, in the direction of Bidcombe, and there danced round the hobby-horſe for ſome time. Then home to breakfaſt, and off to Dunſter Caſtle, where they were regaled with ale, and preſented with coin, after gam-

boling about for ſome time on the lawn in front of the entrance. Then back again to Minehead, collecting donations on their way. The feſtivities appear to have laſted till May 3rd, and terminated in another croſs-way in the Porlock Road. Years ago, many of the tradeſpeople, and others of reſpectability in Minehead, took part in the proceedings; but, at the preſent day, the ſole repreſentative of this ancient cuſtom is a man who comes to the Caſtle on the 1ſt of May, accompanied by a few children.

Midſummer.

With the kind permiſſion of Miss Alice King, I am permitted to extract ſome ſuperſtitious cuſtoms from the pages of the *Argoſy*. "As Midſummer draws near a great deal of whiſpering goes on covertly between Dick the ploughboy and Suſan the houſegirl. The uninitiated would ſuppoſe that all this chain of ſignificant glances and murmured words muſt ſurely end in a wedding-ring. But far from that, both Dick and Suſan have ſet their hearts upon objects quite different from each other; and they wiſh to know whether they

are to reach their deſire. Great care is taken to keep their intention ſecret; for if any third perſon were to know of it, it would break the charm. On Midſummer eve, after all the family are ſafe in bed, Dick and Suſan creep down ſtairs into the kitchen. She buſies herſelf in ſpreading the table with bread, cheeſe, and cider; and he opens wide all the doors. Then they ſit down oppoſite each other, with their Prayer Book opened at the Marriage Service in their hands. They muſt not ſpeak, or the ſpell would be broken; and they can only exchange frightened, expectant glances. The clock ticks myſteriouſly, the embers ſmoulder in the kitchen grate, a mouſe ſqueaks behind the wainſcot. Midnight ſtrikes. Hour of awful expectation! In glide through the open door two ſhadowy forms—one of a man, the other of a woman. Though ſhaking in every limb, Dick and Suſan ſtrain their eyes to get a view of the faces of the phantoms; for theſe are the wraiths of their future huſband and wife. The ſpectral viſitors approach the table, eat and drink, and then glide out again as they came. Should a coffin walk in bolt upright, it is an unmiſtakable ſign that either Dick or Suſan will never ſee another Midſummer. If

the reſult is no apparition of any kind, Dick and Suſan fall to on the bread and cheeſe, and make love to each other for conſolation."

"Another way in which a girl may catch a ſight of her future huſband is by going out into the churchyard on Midſummer Eve with a handful of hempſeed, which ſhe throws down behind her without looking back, and, as ſhe does ſo, ſhe ſays,

'Hemp-ſeed I ſcatter,
Hemp-ſeed I ſow;
He that is my true love,
Come after me and mow.'

Then ſhe runs away; but, as ſhe goes, ſhe will, if ſhe is bold enough to turn her head, ſee the wraith of her lover purſuing her with a ſcythe. More timid maidens have a leſs fearful way of diſcovering their bridegroom. They employ their little brother at the village ſchool to write out for them, in his largeſt hand, all the letters of the alphabet, each on a ſeparate bit of paper. When the important night comes, the girl puts the letters face downwards in a baſin of water, hoping that in the morning ſhe ſhall find, turned up, the initials of her huſband that is to be. She puts

the baſin under her bed, and then lies down. The owl flies hooting paſt her window; a gnat buzzes around her pillow; the wind ſtirs lightly the trees. She hears all theſe ſounds, for ſhe cannot ſleep. She is thinking of two certain letters ſhe half hopes ſhe may find, and her beating heart counts the moments. At laſt the kindling eaſt wakes up the ſwallows, and they begin to twitter. She ſprings from her bed, and with a trembling hand ſeizes the baſin, to find (Oh, horror!) that not one letter has turned up; and ſhe throws it out of the window, declaring ſhe wont be an old maid."

"There is a far more uncanny adventure than any of theſe, which may be tried on Midſummer Eve, but which hardly the boldeſt will dare: When the tomb-ſtones glimmer in the moonlight, and dark ſhadows lie thick around the old church, Roger, the ſturdy ſhepherd, who is reſolved to brave every ſupernatural peril, takes his ſeat in the church porch to keep a Midſummer vigil. The clock ſtrikes twelve, and the church bell begins to toll with a low, muffled ſound. Rapidly the churchyard becomes full of ſhapes of men and women; they all glide into the church,

the door of which is opened by inviſible hands; and, as they paſs by, Roger recognizes the ſimilitudes of all his village neighbours. They continue to come till every human being in the pariſh is gone into the church: old grandfathers, and young mothers; the hard-worked, middle-aged man, and the little, toddling child; the ſquire's lady, in her ſilks, and the mole-catcher's wife, in her darned ſhawl; even his own pretty daughter, Lucy, the roſe-bud of his cottage, all are there. Theſe forms are, in dreſs and in feature, exactly like the living, breathing men and women he ſees around him every day; but their hands and faces are tranſparent, their garments ſeem woven out of miſt, and his whole body is chilled as he looks at them. By-and-bye up come the parſon and clerk, both of them as unſubſtantial as the reſt. Then the door cloſes, and the muffled bell is ſilent. There is a wild, plaintive ſound, which might be a mournful breeze ſwelling through the church, but which the watcher knows to be the ſpirits making weird muſic on the organ. After that there is a noiſe as of hollow voices murmuring together. How long it laſts he knows not; it may be a few minutes, it may be an

hour; the power of calculating time is loſt to his mind. At length the door opens, and the ſhadowy congregation begin to ſtream out. He is as cold and ſtiff with terror as if he were one of the tombſtones, but ſtill he is fully awake to the ſad knowledge which he may gain by obſerving cloſely thoſe paſſing ſhapes; for whatever man or woman's double does not come out of church to-night, that man or woman will die during the year. He watches them with his whole ſoul in his eyes. The young bride, who was married laſt week, does not come out with her huſband; he is alone! That mother has not any longer her baby in her arms. The patriarch of the pariſh hobbles forth without his old wife—the companion of fifty years. But where is Roger's pretty Lucy? He ſees that but a few more are left to come, and a ſickening dread fills the father's heart. Now they are all gone, the door is ſhut, and Lucy is left behind. He calls out her name in his anguiſh: 'Lucy, Lucy!' but only the echo from the church anſwers him. The next morning, when the ſexton comes to open the church for Sabbath prayer, he finds an idiot ſitting in the porch."

On the Saturday after Midſummer Day, an ancient and remarkable cuſtom was formerly obſerved at Puxton village, in reference to the allotment of two large pieces of common land, called Eaſt and Weſt Dolemoors, which lie in the pariſhes of Congreſbury, Wick St. Lawrence, and Puxton. The ſeveral proprietors of the eſtates having any right in thoſe moors, or their tenants, were ſummoned at a certain hour in the morning, by the ringing of one of the bells of Puxton Church, to repair to the ſacred edifice in order to ſee the chain kept for the purpoſe of laying out Dolemoors meaſured. The proper length of ſuch chain was aſcertained by fixing one end of it at the foot of the chancel arch, and extending it through the middle of the nave, to the foot of the arch of the weſt door under the tower, at each of which places marks were cut in the ſtones for that purpoſe. The chain was only eighteen yards in length, and, conſequently, four yards ſhorter than the regular land-meaſuring chain. After the above ceremony had been properly performed, the parties repaired to the commons. Twenty-four apples were previouſly prepared, bearing the following

marks, viz., five marks called "Pole-axes," four ditto "Croſſes," two ditto "Dung-forks, or Dung-pikes," one ditto called "Four Oxen and a Mare," one ditto "Two Pits," one ditto "Three Pits," one ditto "Four Pits," one ditto "Five Pits," one ditto "Seven Pits," one "Horn," one "Hare's Tail," one "Duck's Neſt," one "Oven," one "Shell," one "Evil," and one "Hand-reel." Each of the moors was divided into ſeveral portions, called furlongs, which were indicated by ſtrong oak poſts, placed at regular diſtances from each other, which poſts were conſtantly kept up. After the apples were properly prepared, they were put into a hat or bag, and certain perſons, choſen for that purpoſe, began to meaſure with the chain before mentioned, and proceeded till they had meaſured off one acre of ground; at the end of which the boy who carried the hat or bag took out one of the apples, and the mark which ſuch apple bore was immediately cut in the turf with a large knife, which was ſomewhat in the ſhape of a ſcimeter, with its edge reverſed. In this manner they proceeded, till the whole of the commons were laid out, and each proprietor knowing the mark and furlong which belonged to his eſtate, he

took poſſeſſion of his allotment, or allotments, accordingly, for the enſuing year. An adjournment then took place to the houſe of one of the overſeers, when a certain number of acres, reſerved for the payment of expenſes, and called the "out-let or out-drift," were let by inch of candle. During the time of letting, the whole party (except the bidders) were to keep ſilence, under the penalty of one ſhilling. When any one wiſhed to bid, he named the price he would give, and immediately depoſited a ſhilling on the table where the candle ſtood. The next who bid alſo named his price, and depoſited his ſhilling in like manner, and the firſt bidder was then to take up his ſhilling. The buſineſs of letting thus proceeded till the candle was burnt out, and the laſt bidder, prior to that event, was declared the tenant of the out-let or out-drift for the enſuing year.

Two overſeers were annually elected from the proprietors, or their tenants. A quantity of ſtrong ale, or brown ſtout, was allowed for the feaſt or "revel;" alſo bread, butter, cheeſe, pipes, and tobacco. Any reputable perſon whoſe curioſity or caſual buſineſs led him to Puxton on that day was at liberty to ſhare in

the feſtivities, but he was expected at his departure to depoſit one ſhilling with the overſeer, by way of forfeit for his intruſion. The day was generally ſpent in ſociality and mirth of a boiſterous character, and it rarely happened but that ſome of the junior part of the company, under the influence of ſtrong drink, engaged in pugiliſtic conteſts.

In the year 1779 an unſucceſsful attempt was made to procure an Act of Parliament for allotting theſe moors in perpetuity. The land, however, was encloſed and allotted in 1811; and the ancient mode of dividing it, and conſequently the "revel," from that time discontinued.

—oo—

Michaelmas Day.

In Brand's *Antiquities* we read that at this ſeaſon village maidens in the weſt of England go up and down the hedges gathering crab-apples, which they carry home, putting them into a loft, and forming with them the initials of their ſuppoſed ſuitors' names. The initials which are found on examination to be moſt perfect on Old Michaelmas Day, are conſidered

to repreſent the ſtrongeſt attachments, and the beſt for the choice of huſbands.

—oo—

Relics of Religious Customs.

How pleaſing is it to reflect on innocent, loving, and religious cuſtoms ſtill exiſting in our midſt, ſhorn though they may be of their original beauty. Often, when a candle has not been lighted in the chamber of the dead, have I heard a remonſtrance couched in words like theſe—"What a lack of reſpect!" or "Little do they care for the dead one!" This cuſtom, a relic of Catholic times, is not peculiar to Somerſet, but may be found exiſting in Northumberland and the Iſle of Man. The Church of England did its beſt to deſtroy it, for in the liſt of articles to be inquired of within the Archdeaconry of York, the following queſtion was aſked—"Whether at the death of any, there be any ſuperſtitious burning of candles?" However, the practice was kept up, and breathed, let us hope, the ſame wiſh of the church ("Et lux perpetua luceat eis.") of olden days. Many of the poets have

with good effect illuſtrated this pious cuſtom: of Sir Amadeus it is ſaid—

"Betwene a foreſt and a cetè
He fonde a chapell of ſton and tre.
And ſaw therin greyt lyghte.
* * * *
Over his heyd he drew his hode,
And to the chapell dore he yode,
Mo anters for to here,
He loked in at a windo of glas,
For to wytte what therin was,
And ther he founde a bere;
A bere he ſaw and candyls too,
A woman ſytt," &c.*

"THE PASSING-BELL," or Soul-Bell, is ſtill rung in many villages at the deceaſe of a pariſhioner; it was anciently rung to beſpeak the prayers of all good Chriſtians for the ſoul juſt departing, and to drive away the evil ſpirits who ſtood at the foot of the bed ready to ſeize their prey, or at leaſt to moleſt the ſoul in its paſſage. The preſent national ſaying—

"When the bell begins to toll,
LORD have mercy on the ſoul"—

was prevalent in the time of the Venerable BEDE. He ſays, in his *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, "Unde dicunt in

* Weber's *Metrical Romances.*

proverbio Deus miſerere animabus dixit Oſwaldus, cadens in terram." Among the many objections of the Browniſts, it was laid to the charge of the Church of England, that this cuſtom was a "Popiſh" relic, and inculcated the doctrine of prayers for the dead. To this Biſhop Hall writes: "We call them ſoul-bells, for that they ſignify the departure of the ſoul, not for that they help the paſſage of the ſoul." The Independents might have conſulted the Articles with profit to ſhow them that the Eſtabliſhment taught no ſuch doctrine. The tolling of the bell has given riſe to an obſcure proverb. The ſtrokes told or counted at the end of a knell were called, from their office, *tellers*. This term, again, was corrupted into "tailors," from their ſounding at the end of the knell; and nine of theſe being given to announce the death of an adult gave riſe to the common ſaying, "Nine tailors make a man." Of a wit, who having been given an entertainment by the Guild of Tailors, it is ſaid, that on his departure, he made the following finale to his ſpeech: "Gentlemen, I am indebted to you for ſome moſt delightful hours, the enjoyment and honour of which ſhall never fade from my recollection. Gentle-

men"—there were eighteen preſent—"I wiſh you *both* a very good evening." *

"THE CURFEW-BELL," too, is ſtill rung. I am, however, of the opinion, that the ringing of the bell at night is a relic of the compline-bell, when people were ſummoned to completorium before retiring to reſt. Peſhall, in his *Hiſtory of the City of Oxford*, writes: "The cuſtom of ringing the bell at Carfax, every night at eight, was by order of King Alfred." If the curfew-bell was a type of ſlavery, we ſhould hardly expect the ancient Church of England ſanctioning ſuch a practice. In many places land was left to pay for the bell-ropes, and the ringing of the bells, even in the ſixteenth century, we find in Biſhop Hall's *Fourth Satire*, this:

> "Who ever gives a paire of velvet ſhoes
> To th' Holy Rood, or liberally allowes
> But a new rope to ring the couvre-feu bell,
> But he deſires that his great deed may dwell,
> Or graven in the chancel window glaſſe,
> Or in his laſting tombe of plated braſſe."

The NORTH SIDE OF THE CHURCHYARD is carefully avoided. R. Hunt, in his *Romances of the Weſt*,

* Blackley's *Word-Goſſip*.

writes: "I have ſought to diſcover, if poſſible, the origin of this prejudice, but I have not been able to trace it to any well-defined feeling. I have been anſwered, 'O we like to bury a corpſe where the ſun will ſhine on the grave;' and 'The northern graveyard is in the ſhadow and cold.'" However, we may find an explanation in the ancient practice of praying for the ſouls of the departed. People on their way to church were reminded of the deceaſed friends by their graveſtones bearing the inſcription "Of your charity, pray for the ſoul," &c.; hence, as the principal door was in the ſouth, more graves would be found in that portion of the churchyard. The north door is the principal entrance of the Church of Drayton Beauchamp, the pariſh in which "the judicious Hooker" miniſtered, the northern approach is crowded with graves, while the ſouth ſide of the yard is comparatively deſerted. The cuſtom, too, of boys wearing willow or ſallow on Palm Sunday is a relic of the Catholic ceremony of bleſſing and wearing palms in memory of Our LORD entering Jeruſalem—a ceremony that was diſcontinued in 1548, but not forgotten for ſome time, for in the Articles to be inquired of within the Arch-

deaconry of York, the following alluſion is made to it (*circa* 1600): the queſtion was aſked, "Whether there be any ſuperſtitious uſe of croſſes, with towels, palmes, metwands, or other memories of idolaters." In the county of Stafford, many of the miners reſort to the Catholic church to obtain palms, ſo that often the chapels are completely filled with Proteſtants, who wiſh to obtain the boughs, and uſe them in the mines as a charm againſt the Devil. I cannot find the Somerſetſhire peaſantry uſing them in the ſame way.

In the neighbourhood of Bath there exiſts a ſtrong feeling in favour of the efficacy of HOLY WATER. A prieſt informs me that he has been often applied to for ſome, for the ſick, and has been told at the ſame time that the doctor had owned his incapability of doing any beneficial ſervice to the patient, but if they went to the prieſt, he could give them ſomething that would cure the ſick. The ſame feeling (he writes) exiſted in the neighbourhood of Shepton Mallet, for The Ven. Dr. Coombes had many calls from Proteſtant parties for holy water; and on one occaſion a farmer called on him for ſome to exorciſe his cattle, which were bewitched, and the Doctor having none

at the time, bleſſed ſome in the preſence of the man, who, during the ceremony, deſired the reverend gentleman to make it *very ſtrong*, for the Devil was very ſtrong upon his cattle.

GETTING THE LEFT HAND OF THE BISHOP AT CONFIRMATION is conſidered unlucky; and, when I was confirmed, I remember being warned by a ſervant to try and get the right hand. However, I managed to get the left (for in thoſe days biſhops did not confirm ſingly), much to her chagrin.

At BAPTISM, too, if a child ſcreams, the Devil is ſaid to depart from it, a ſaying which aroſe, no doubt, from the *Exi ab eo* and the *Tu autem fuge* of the Roman ritual.

Appertaining to Mendip, its adjacent towns and villages, were formerly curious MINING-LAWS AND CUSTOMS. Theſe were in force centuries before the encloſure of the foreſt-land. It was then the land of "diggings;" and although enterpriſing and hard-working adventurers were not rewarded for their toil by "nuggets" of gold, yet lead ore, carbonate of copper, lapis calaminaris, and other valuable minerals were obtained more or leſs abundantly. Anybody was at

liberty to open a mine, provided he firſt obtained a licence, and obſerved theſe laws, of which the following is a copy, which I have extracted from Mr. Farbrother's *Hiſtory of Shepton Mallet.*

"Be it right well known; That it is enrolled in the KING'S HIGHNESSE EXCHEQUER in ye time of KING EDWARD ye FOURTH, of a great debate that was in ye COUNTY of SOMERSET, between Lord BONVILLS Tenants of Chuton, and the PRIOR of GREEN OARE. The ſaid Prior complained to KING EDWARD of great injuries and wrongs that he had upon Meyndeepe, being the King's Forreſt. The ſaid King Edward commanded my LORD CHOCKE, being Chief Juſtice of England, to goe downe into ye Country of Meyndeepe and ſett a Concord and Peace in ye Country upon Meyndeep. The ſaid LORD CHOCKE ſate upon a place of my Lord of BATHES, called the Fordge upon Meyndeepe, Whereas he commanded all the commoners to appear, and in eſpeciall ye four LORDS ROYALE of MEYNDEEP. That is to ſay my Lord BISHOP of BATH and WELLS, My Lord of GLASTENBURY, my LORD LORD BONVILL, Lord of Chuton, and my LORD of RICHMOND, with all ye appearance to ye number of TENN THOUSAND PEOPLE. A proclamation was then made to enquire of all ye ſaid companie how they would be ordered. Then they all made anſwer and ſaid that they would be ordered and tryed by ye foure Lords Royall. Then the foure Lords Royall were agreed that all ye Comoners of Meyndeepe dwelling within there tenements, being within ye bounds of Meyndeepe ſhould turne out their Cattle at their outletts as much the Sumer as they be able to keep the Winter without hounding or pounding, upon whoſe grounds ſoever they went to take their courſe or recourſe. To this ye ſaide foure Lordes did put their Seales And alſo where agreed that whoſoever ſhould breake any of theſe bounds ſhould forfeite to ye King one thouſand markes, and all the Comoners their Bodyes and goods at ye King's pleaſure that doth either hound or pound.

"The olde Ancient Cuſtome of ye occupation of ye Meynderies in and upon ye Kings Maties forreſt upon Meyndeepe within his Maties County of Som^r^ſet being one of ye foure ſtaples of England which has been exerciſed and continued through the ſaid forreſt from ye time

whereof man now living hath no memory, is hereafter as doth particularly enſue.

"1. *Item*—that if any man, whatſoever he be that doth intend to venter his life to be a workman in the Myndery occupation he muſt firſt of all require lycence of the Lorde of the ſoyle, where he doth purpoſe to worke, or in his abſence of his Officer, as Lead Reve, or Baylee and the Lorde neither his Bayliffe or officer can deny him &c.

"2. *Item*—that after the firſt lycenſe had the Workman ſhall never neede to aſke leave again but to be at his freewill to pitch within ye ſaide forreſt and to breake ground where or in what place it ſhall beſt like him to his behoofe and profit using himſelf juſtlye and trulye, &c.

"3. *Item*—that every man that doth begin his pitt or Groove ſhall have his hacks thrown a wayes after the Rake: And note that he that doth throw the Hacks muſt ſtand in this s^{d} Grove to the depth of his waſt. And then no man ſhall or may work within the compaſſe of his ſaid hacks throw.

"4. *Item*—That when a workman hath landed his Oare he may carry ye ſame to cleanſing & blowing to what Mynedrie he ſhall pleaſe for ye more ſpeedy making of ye ſame. ſo that he do trulie pay the tenth thereof to ye Lord of the ſoyle where it was landed.

"5. *Item*—That if any Lord or his Officer hath once given lycence to any man to build or ſett upon any Hearth or waſhing houſe to waſh and cleanſe and blow their Oare he who hath ſo once leave ſhall keepe it, or ſell it, or give it to whom it ſhall pleaſe him, ſo that he ſhall juſtlie and trulie pay the lott lead, which if ye tenth pounde that ſhall be blowne at ye ſame Hearth, and alſoe if he keepe it tenantable as the Craft doth require.

"6. *Item*—That if any man of that occupation doe picke or ſteale any lead or lead Oare to ye valey of $13^{L}\ \frac{1}{2}$ the Lord or his Officer may arreſt all his lead or Oare House, or Hearths with all his grooves and workes, and keepe them as forfeit to his owne uſe. And ſhall take ye perſon that ſo hath offended and bring where his houſe or worke and all his tooles and Inſtruments belonging to the ſame occupacion be and put him into his Houſe or workes, and ſett fire in alltogether about him and baniſh him from that Occupacio before all ye Myneders for ever.

"7. *Item*—That if ever that perſon do pick or ſteale there any more he ſhall be tried by the comon Law, for this Cuſtom and Law hath noe more to do with him.

"8. *Item*—That every Lord of Soyle or Soyles ought to keepe two Mynedrie Courts by the yeare and to ſweare twelve men, or more of ye ſame occupacion for ye order of all misdemeanours and wrongs touching the Mynderies.

"9. *Item*—The Lord or Lords may make three manner of Arreſts (that is to ſay ye firſt is for ſtrife between man and man for theire Workes, under the Earth &c. the ſecond is for his own duty for Lead or oare, whereſoever he finde it within ye ſaid forreſt. the third is upon felons goods of ye ſame occupacion, wherever he ſhall find it within ye ſame Hill &c.)

"10. *Item*—That if any man by the means of this doubtful and dangerous occupacion doe by misfortune take his death, as by falling the Earth upon him, by drowning, by ſtifling, by fire or otherwiſe, as in time paſt, many have been. The workmen of this occupacion are bound to fetch ye Body out of ye Earth, and bring him to Chriſtian buriall at theire own proper coſts & charges although he be three ſcore fathom under the Earth as heretofore hath been ſeene. And the Coroner, or any other Officer at large ſhall not have to do with him or them."

"Deluſions of the days that once have been,
Witchcraft and wonders of the world unſeen,
Phantoms of air, and necromantic arts
That cruſhed the weak and awed the ſtouteſt hearts—
Theſe are our themes; and vaguely here,
Through the dim miſts that crowd the atmoſphere,
We draw the outlines of weird figures caſt
In ſhadow on the background of the Paſt."

Prologue to GILES COREY.

SUPERSTITIONS.

Fairies.

"Merry elves, their morrice pacing,
To aërial minſtrelſy,
Emerald rings on brown heath tracing,
Trip it deft and merrily."

CONCERNING the "Merry Elves" rejoicing in the name of FAIRIES, I have not been able from perſonal knowledge to authenticate many proofs of their exiſtence. Somerſetſhire, however, has not loſt altogether the belief in theſe rural elves, for the "emerald rings" are ſtill ſuppoſed by the ruſtics to be cauſed by their aerial dances. An account of a Fairy Fair is mentioned by the author of *The Pandemonium*. He ſays: "The place near which they moſt ordinarily ſhowed themſelves was on the ſide of a hill, named Black Down, between the pariſhes of Pittminſter

and Cheſtonford, not many miles from Tanton. Thoſe that have had occaſion to travel that way have frequently ſeen them there, appearing like men and women, of a ſtature generally near the ſmaller ſize of men. Their habits uſed to be of red, blue, or green, according to the old way of country garb, with high-crowned hats. One time, about fifty years ſince, a perſon living at Comb St. Nicholas, a pariſh lying on one ſide of that hill, near Chard, was riding towards his home that way, and ſaw, juſt before him, on the ſide of the hill, a great company of people, that ſeemed to him like country folks aſſembled as at a fair. There were all ſorts of commodities, to his appearance, as at our ordinary fairs: pewterers, ſhoemakers, pedlars, with all kind of trinkets, fruit and drinking-booths. He could not remember anything which he had uſually ſeen at fairs but what he ſaw there. It was once in his thoughts that it might be ſome fair for Cheſtonford, there being a conſiderable one at ſome time of the year; but then again he conſidered that it was not the ſeaſon for it. He was under very great ſurpriſe, and admired what the meaning of what he ſaw ſhould be. At length it came into his

mind what he had heard concerning the Fairies on the ſide of that hill; and it being near the road he was to take, he reſolved to ride in amongſt them, and ſee what they were. Accordingly he put on his horſe that way, and, though he ſaw them perfectly all along as he came, yet when he was upon the place where all this had appeared to him, he could diſcern nothing at all, only ſeemed to be crowded and thruſt, as when one paſſes through a throng of people. All the reſt became inviſible to him until he came to a little diſtance, and then it appeared to him again as at firſt. He found himſelf in pain, and ſo haſtened home; where, being arrived, lameneſs ſeized him all on one ſide, which continued on him as long as he lived, which was many years; for he was living in Comb, and gave an account to any that inquired of this accident for more than twenty years afterwards; and this relation I had from a perſon of known honour, who had it from the man himſelf."

"There were ſome whoſe names I have now forgot, but they then lived at a gentleman's houſe, named Comb Farm, near the place before ſpecified: both the man, his wife, and divers of the neighbours,

aſſured me they had, at many times, ſeen this *fair-keeping* in the ſummer time, as they came from Tanton market, but they durſt not adventure in amongſt them, for that every one that had done ſo had received great damage by it."

Divination,

Or FORTUNE-TELLING, has always been one of the chief objects of the magical art. Ornithomancy was reduced to a ſyſtem among the Romans, who employed augurs *(avium garritus)*. With them, no work of any kind was undertaken without taking the auſpices: if they were favourable, the work was proceeded with; if not, it was deferred. The moſt warlike of the aboriginal nations of America practiſed divination by birds in a manner not unlike that of the ancient Romans. Remnants of belief in the prophetic character of birds ſtill ſurvive: on ſeeing Magpies, the ruſtics believe in the rhyme—

"One for ſorrow,
Two for mirth,
Three for a wedding,
Four for a birth."

The crowing of a Hen bodes evil, and is frequently followed by the death of ſome member of the family; when, therefore, a crowing hen is heard, the good farmer's wife makes the offending fowl pay the penalty and avert the omen by chopping off the head. I have often heard it ſtated that no houſe will thrive whoſe hens are accuſtomed to crow, hence the old proverb—

> "A whiſtling woman and a crowing hen
> Are neither fit for God nor men."

The French have a ſimilar proverb—

> "Une poule qui chante le coq, et une fille qui ſiffle, portent malheur dans la maiſon."

Before the death of a farmer, his poultry frequently go to rooſt at noon-day inſtead of the uſual time, and when the cock ſtruts up to the door and ſounds his clarion on the threſhold, the houſewife is warned that ſhe may ſoon expect a ſtranger (vide *Notes and Queries*, vol. 2). I once reſided for a vacation in a farmhouſe in this county, and it was a cuſtom with the farmer's wife to kill all the fowls which came in at the door, probably fearing that death would enſue if ſhe did not avert ſo great a calamity. In what is called "ſetting a hen," care is taken that the neſt be compoſed of

an odd number of eggs. If even, the chicken would not proſper. Crows are alſo harbingers of evil, for if one is ſeen flying alone it betokens ill-luck, and to ſee one perched in the path is a ſign of wrath. The ſcreech of the Owl is ſtill heard with alarm:

"The oule eke that of deth the bode bryngeth."

Cuckoos, too, come in for their ſhare of patronage; for when the cry of one is heard for the firſt time, it is uſual to turn the money in the pocket and wiſh: children often ſing—

"Cuckoo, cuckoo, cherry tree,
Catch a penny and give it me."

The Robin is held in great veneration. To kill one is deemed unlucky. Before the death of a perſon this bird is ſaid to tap thrice at the window. The Wren is alſo treated with great reſpect *(Notes and Queries)*. The praiſes of both are ſung in the old couplet:

"The robin and the wren
Are God Almighty's cock and hen."

The wren was ſacred in the eyes of the Druids. The robin's breaſt was white, but, fleeing into the ſide of the SAVIOUR ſuſpended on the croſs, ever ſince has

had its breaſt red. The "ſainfoin" was white (a ſimilar legend ſaith); it grew at the foot of the croſs. The blood of the SAVIOUR trickled down upon it, and lo! it becomes "holy herbage!" How poetical! Truly ὁ ποιητής is a creator of images!

TRANSPLANTING PARSLEY was, and is, I believe, ſtill conſidered unlucky; even among the ancients this plant was regarded with awe. We read of a whole army in Plutarch* being put to flight by two mules, laden with this uſeful herb, coming in ſight. The ſalt-cellar overturning has rendered many a ruſtic miſerable, but the calamity may be averted by throwing the ſalt over the ſhoulder into the fire:

> "Mollivit averſos Penates
> Farre pio, et ſaliente micâ."†

TO BREAK A LOOKING-GLASS is accounted a very unlucky accident, and dooms the breaker to ſeven years of ill-luck. The EARS TINGLING (an omen mentioned by Pliny (Abſentes tinnitu aurium præſentire ſermones de ſe receptum eſt), foretell that the perſon whoſe ears are tingling is being talked of, if

* *Timoleon.* † *Horat.*, lib. iii, od. 23.

the right ear burns they are ſpeaking good; if the left, bad: however, if the one who is maligned bites his little finger, the ſlanderer will bite his tongue. "The fungous parcels," as Sir Thomas Browne calls them, often ſeen around the wicks of candles, are commonly thought to foretell the coming of ſtrangers. In Somerſetſhire I have heard them called "LETTERS IN THE CANDLE;" and, accordingly, the ſuperſtitious would await the poſtman with anxiety. DOGS HOWLING is a preſage of death to the ſick. Brand writes: "I know not what has given riſe to this: dogs have been known to ſtand and howl over the bodies of their maſters when they have been murdered, or died an accidental death: taking ſuch note of what is paſt, is an inſtance of great ſenſibility in this faithful animal, without ſuppoſing that it has in the ſmalleſt degree any preſcience of the future." Shakeſpeare, in his *King Henry VI*, ranks this among omens:

> "The owl ſhriek'd at thy birth, an evil ſign;
> The night-crow cried, aboding luckleſs time;
> Dogs howl'd, and hideous tempeſts ſhook down trees."

Many omens derive their origin from obſerving what firſt happens to one, or what animal or perſon one

meets firſt in the morning, or at the commencement of an undertaking. To ſtumble has been univerſally held to preſage misfortune. A HARE CROSSING THE PATH OF A MAN UNDERTAKING SOME JOURNEY has been held, I believe, univerſally in all climes to prognoſticate evil. The Ancient Britons made no uſe of hares as an article of diet (Vide *Cæſar de Bello Gallico*, lib. v, cap. x), and the augurial expreſſion of the Romans, "Inauſpicatum dat iter oblatus lepus," ſerved probably to foſter the ſuperſtitious omen. In the *Confeſſions of a Thug* (which is partly built on a real judicial document, and everywhere conforms to the uſages of Hindoſtan), the hero of the horrid narrative charges ſome diſaſter of his own upon having neglected ſuch an omen in the morning. The ſame omen announced to Lord Lindſay's Arab attendants in the deſert, the approach of ſome diſaſter which partially happened in the morning; and a Highlander of the Forty-ſecond Regiment, in his printed memoirs, notices the ſame harbinger of evil as having croſſed his own path on a day of perſonal diſaſter in Spain.

The DEATH-RATTLE, a noiſe made in reſpiring by ſick perſons, is an omen of death (Vide *Levinus*

Lemnius, as quoted by Brand). So alſo many country dames, by the ſick picking the bed-clothes, prognoſticate death.

—oo—

Rhabdomancy.

EVEN this county is not free from a claſs of men who practiſe RHABDOMANCY. They carry a rod or magic wand (ῥάβδος) of willow, ſhaped like a ſmall pair of tongs; and on the performer holding the prongs, and turning the undivided end towards the ground, the ſtick becomes agitated, and ſhows the ſpot from which water will proceed on a well being ſunk; if the agitation of the rod be reſiſted by the holder, the ſtick will be broken if turned in the oppoſite direction. The operators are called dowſers or jowſers. De Quincey gives an intereſting account of this art, and relates that he himſelf knew an amiable Scottiſh family who, at an eſtate called Belmaduthie, in memory of a ſimilar property in Roſs-ſhire, built a houſe in Somerſetſhire, and reſolved to find water without help from the jowſer. But after ſinking to a greater depth than ever had been known before, and ſpending a

large ſum of money, they were obliged to conſult the jowſer, who found water at once. The Rev. H. P. Knapton alſo kindly ſent me an account of the ῥᾰ́βδομᾰ́ντεια. He wrote as follows: "The dowſer is as commonly uſed along the Polden Hills for getting water as the turncock would be in London. On the occaſion when he ſaw the divining-rod uſed, it was at the houſe of a country gentleman; there were preſent three Cambridge graduates in honours, and three ladies of the family well educated and highly intelligent; the dowſer was brought to the garden, in which a new well was required; the rod was uſed by him in the manner in which I have deſcribed above, and water was found. Of thoſe preſent, two found the rod turn in their hand; the other four, among whom was my informant, felt no influence. This dowſer was never known to fail: he is a very reſpectable carpenter, a religious man, and rather inclined to Methodiſm." C. Pooley, Eſq., F.S.A., alſo informed me that he has reaſons to believe that water was diſcovered about forty or fifty years ago, by officials appointed for that purpoſe, at or near the High Common, Bath. A very intereſting article on this

ſubject appeared in the *Quarterly Review* (vol. xxi, 1819), which is well worth peruſal. I have ſeen it ſtated that this art is derived from the Phœnicians, but I can hardly credit it; for although in the whole range of Greek literature we find the magic wand of Hermês (*Il.* xxiv, 343, *Od.* v, 47, &c.) compoſing to ſleep and awakening men, the magic rod of Kirkê (*Od.* x, 238, 319) and of Athênê (*Od.* xiii, 429) and even an angling rod (*Od.* xii, 251), yet nowhere can I find it, meaning a *divining* rod, for the diſcovery of metals. In my opinion it is a relic of ſuperſtition left by thoſe ſages who were the prototype of the Douſterſwivel of our northern enchanters.

The word ῥάβδος, however, is once uſed in an author now not generally read* for a vein of metal, and the practice of uſing the divining-rod for the diſcovery of metals is, I believe, ſtill left in Cornwall. In the hand of one walking, a ſtaff ſupports and enables the traveller to finiſh the journey. With this, the heathen of old uſed to divine what courſe they ſhould follow (*Hosea* iv, 12). The Rev. R. A. Taylor wrote to me ſome time ago, informing me

* *Theophraſtus.*

that a cuſtom of divining by ſticks placed in a bag is ſtill common in Somerſet, in a manner not unlike that of the Germans. In Tacitus we find that they cut twigs off a fruit tree, and, having diſtinguiſhed them by various marks, enveloped them in a white cloth. The words of Tacitus are—"Sortium conſuetudo ſimplex. Virgam, frugiferæ arbori deciſam, in furculos amputant, eoſque, notiſque quibusdam diſcretos, ſuper candidam veſtem temere ac fortuito ſpargunt. Mox, ſi publice conſuletur, Sacerdos civitatis, ſin privatim, ipſe paterfamiliae precatus Deos, cœlumque ſuſpiciens, ter ſingulos tollit, ſublatos, ſecundum impreſſam ante notam, interpretatur. Si prohibuerunt nulla de eadem in eundem diem conſultatio; ſin permiſſum, auſpiciorum adhuc fides exigitur."

—oo—

Ghoſts, &c.

GHOSTS are of Chriſtian origin, as the idea of one could not be reproduced by Paganiſm; for, at diſſolution, the body was reſolved into — corpus, manes, ſpiritus, anima. When this diſperſion had taken place,

no reſtitution of components could take place—conſciouſneſs was impoſſible. The reluctance of the lower claſſes of ſociety to mention death or its ſurroundings is well known to every parochial clergyman. We can account for it by a belief in the ſuppoſed efficacy of words, the doctrine of Euphemiſm continually cropping up in claſſical authors. The Greeks and Romans thought that when they uſed words of bad omen, they would draw down evil on themſelves (Vide *Æn.*, ii, 190). The former ſaid εὐώνυμος rather than σκαιός. The Furies, too, were politely called Eumenides (the gentle ones). The modern Greeks have ſtill their ναραγίδαι, a corruption of νηρηΐδαι; the peaſantry call them καλαὶ ἀρχόντισαι.* Cicero, after ſlaying the conſpirators of Catiline, merely exclaimed, "Vixerunt." And when theſe claſſical people had to mention death, it was couched in words like theſe: "Si quidam humanum paſſus fuerit." In the *Hiſtory of the Skeleton of Death*, we find that even in the Middle Ages, great delicacy was uſed in ſpeaking of death, eſpecially when treating of kings and nobles. Tranſire

* Vide *Leonis Allatii de Graecorum hodie quorundam opinationibus.* 1645. Cologne.

à ſæculo. Vitam ſuam mutare. Among the Muſſulmen it is conſidered a breach of etiquette to mention the word death; the phraſe, "His deſtiny is cloſed!" muſt be uſed. The Chineſe officially announced the death of their diſſipated monarch, the late Emperor, by commencing—"The Great Emperor has become a gueſt in heaven." Many of theſe cuſtoms, rites, and omens are beautifully illustrated by the explanation of eaſtern ſages; ghoſts viſiting treaſures is no proof with them that the ſpirit loved gold, but at death it was obliged to hand over the money to another cuſtodian.

The LOSS OF BURIAL was a fruitful cauſe of reſtleſſneſs to the larvae or lemures. In Virgil we have—

> "Haec omnis, quam cernis, inops inhumataque turba est;
> Portitor ille Charon; hi, quos vehit unda, ſepulti.
> Nec ripas datur horrendas et rauca fluenta
> Tranſportare prius, quam ſedibus oſſa quierunt."

UNBAPTIZED INFANTS are ſuppoſed to be doomed to flutter about as will-o'-the-wiſps or ignes fatui, not for a hundred years, but until the Second Advent.

Among the Germans, Hulda, an ancient goddeſs, was accompanied by a crowd of infant ſouls. ODIN,

too, in his wild hunt ruſhed over the tree-tops, followed by the ſcudding train of the ſpirits of warriors. The names given to the ſoul ſignify breath or wind, and point to the connexion which was anciently ſuppoſed to exiſt between them: animus, anima, ἄνεμος or ſpiritus, ghoſt, geiſt, gaſt. The claſſical ſtudent will remember the advice given by Soſtrata to Gela—"Animam recipe," * and the addreſs of Horace to Mercury—"Tu pias laetis animas reponis ſedibus.† And while thinking on ghoſts and ſouls, I may remark that in this county, many years ago, I once heard of a man dying, hell-hounds were ſaid to have ruſhed to his chamber to carry his ſoul to hell; and in a certain field, on ſtated occaſions, a woman has been ſeen attended with hounds, who followed madly after her. The uſual tale of courſe ſteps in, and informs us that it was the ghoſt of a rich lady who, ſome hundreds of years ago, was ſo addicted to the habit of hunting that even death itſelf did not end her enjoyment. A trace of a Pagan ſuperſtition is ſtill found exiſting among pious Diſſenters, for, on the death of a member of their community the ſweet ſtrains of muſic are

* *Terence*, Adel. 3, 2, 26. † *Horace*, lib. i, 10 Od.

often ſaid to hover over the houſe. In Goethe's *Elfin-king* we find a ſimilar ſtory: I quote from the tranſlation of Aytoun and Martin.

"Who rides ſo late through the midnight blaſt?
'Tis a father ſpurs on with his child full faſt;
He gathers the boy well into his arm,
He claſps him cloſe, and he keeps him warm.

'My ſon, why thus to my arm doſt cling?'
'Father, doſt thou not ſee the Elfin-king?
The Elfin-king with his crown and train?'
'My ſon, 'tis a ſtreak of the miſty rain!'

'Come hither, thou darling! come, go with me!
Fine games know I that I'll play with thee;
Flowers many and bright do my kingdoms hold,
My mother has many a robe of gold.'

'O father, dear father! and doſt thou not hear
What the Elfin-king whiſpers ſo low in mine ear?'
'Calm, calm thee, my boy, it is only the breeze,
As it ruſtles the wither'd leaves under the trees!'

'Wilt thou go, bonny boy! wilt thou go with me?
My daughters ſhall wait on thee daintilie;
My daughters around thee in dance ſhall ſweep,
And rock thee, and kiſs thee, and ſing thee to ſleep!'

'O father, dear father! and doſt thou not mark
The Elf-king's daughters move by in the dark?'
'I ſee it, my child; but it is not they,
'Tis the old willow nodding its head ſo grey!'

'I love thee! thy beauty, it charms me ſo;
And I'll take thee by force, if thou wilt not go!'
'O father, dear father! he's graſping me—
My heart is as cold as cold can be!'

The father rides ſwiftly—with terror he gaſps—
The ſobbing child in his arms he claſps;
He reaches the caſtle with ſpurring and dread;
But, alack! in his arms the child lay dead!"

—oo—

Magic.

MAGIC is a general name for wonderful effects produced in a myſterious manner. Medicine in its earlieſt form was cloſely allied to it. A few relics of magic ſtill exiſt among our peaſantry, for the prevention and cure of diſeaſes. A DEAD MAN'S HAND is ſuppoſed to poſſeſs the power of diſpelling humours, by its being paſſed nine times over them. An old man, whom I met with in viſiting, informed me that he was taken, when a boy, to Ilcheſter, "to be ſtroked," by a hanged man's hand. Touching a dead body prevents the perſon ſo doing, of dreaming of it. For AGUE, catch a large ſpider, ſhut him up in a box; as he pines, ſo the diſeaſe will decreaſe. COUGHS, too, are cured by paſſing through a flock of ſheep. Excreſcences like warts may be charmed by taking an elder-ſhoot, and rubbing it on the part affected, cutting as many dents on the ſtick as you poſſeſs warts, bury it in a place

where it will ſoon decay, and as the twig corrupts, the warts will vaniſh. TOUCHING FOR THE KING'S EVIL was, and is, held as a cure; for even when the Duke of Monmouth paſſed through Somerſet, many were preſented to him, and derived benefit from his healing touch. Rural charms are, however, getting almoſt out of faſhion. Brand mentions one for a prick or thorn.

"CHRIST was of a Virgin born,
And He was pricked by a thorn;
And it did neither bell nor ſwell,
As I truſt in JESUS this never will."

Another ditty is ſtill ſaid, in lieu of prayers. I once aſked a little child what prayers ſhe ſaid, her reply was the following ditty, a relic of invocation of ſaints now uſed as a charm againſt evil.

"Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—
GOD bleſs the bed that I lie on;
And if I die before I wake,
I hope the LORD my ſoul will take."

Witchcraft.

ANOTHER form, no doubt, of magic. The witches of the paſt centuries are the legitimate deſcendants of the Venefica of the Romans and the Vala of the

Teutons. It is not my preſent intention to give a ſketch of the "Black Art," or to make any comments on the Witch-mania; enough has been written on that ſubject by the learned Wierus, and a very ſuccinct account of the perſecutions endured by many old perſons in various parts of Europe, on the mere ſuſpicion of injuring their neighbours' cattle, may be found in the *Memoirs of Extraordinary Popular Deluſions*, by Dr. Mackay. I ſhall preſent to my readers a few inſtances of witchcraft extracted from various ſources. A contributor to *Notes and Queries*, writes as follows (vol. vii, p. 613): "Perhaps the following account of ſuperſtitions now entertained in ſome parts of Somerſetſhire, will be intereſting to the inquirers into the hiſtory of witchcraft. I was lately informed by a member of my congregation that two children, living near his houſe, were bewitched. I made inquiries into the matter, and found that witchcraft is by far leſs uncommon than I had imagined. I can hardly adduce the two children as an authenticated caſe, becauſe the medical gentleman who attended them pronounced their illneſs to be a kind of ague: but I leave the two following caſes on record in *Notes and*

Queries as memorable inſtances of witchcraft in the nineteenth century.

"A cottager, who does not live five minutes' walk from my house, found his pig ſeized with a ſtrange and unaccountable diſorder. He, being a ſenſible man, inſtead of aſking the advice of a veterinary ſurgeon, immediately went to the white witch (a gentleman who drives a flouriſhing trade in this neighbourhood). He received his directions, and went home and implicitly followed them. In perfect ſilence he went to the pigſty; and lancing each foot and both ears of the pig, he allowed the blood to run into a piece of common dowlas. Then taking two large pins, he pierced the dowlas in oppoſite directions; and ſtill keeping ſilence, entered his cottage, locked the door, placed the bloody rag upon the fire, heaped up ſome turf over it, and reading a few verſes of his Bible, waited until the dowlas was burned. As ſoon as this was done, he returned to the pigſty; found his pig perfectly reſtored to health, and, *mirabile dictu!* as the white witch had predicted, the old woman, who it was ſuppoſed had bewitched the pig, came to inquire after the pig's health. The animal never ſuffered a

day's illneſs afterwards. My informant was the owner of the pig himſelf. Perhaps, when I heard this ſtory, there may have been a lurking expreſſion of doubt upon my face, ſo that my friend thought it neceſſary to give me farther proof. Some time ago a lane in this town* began to be looked upon with a myſterious awe, for every evening a ſtrange white rabbit would appear in it, and, running up and down, would myſteriouſly diſappear. Dogs were frequently put on the ſcent, but all to no purpoſe, the white rabbit could not be caught; and rumours ſoon began to aſſert pretty confidently that the white rabbit was nothing more nor leſs than a witch. The man whoſe pig had been bewitched was all the more confident; as every evening when the rabbit appeared, he had noticed the bedroom window of his old enemy's houſe open! At laſt a large party of bold-hearted men one evening were ſucceſsful enough to find the white rabbit in a garden, the only egreſs from which is through a narrow paſſage between two cottages, all the reſt of the garden being ſecurely ſurrounded by brick walls. They placed a ſtrong guard in this entry

* Bridgewater.

to let nothing paſs, while the remainder advanced as ſkirmiſhers among the cabbages: one of theſe was ſucceſsful, and caught the white rabbit by the ears, and, not without ſome trepidation, carried it towards the reſerve in the entry. But, as he came nearer to his friends, his courage grew; and gradually all the wrongs his poor pig had ſuffered, took form and vigour in a powerful kick at the poor little rabbit. No ſooner had he done this than, he cannot tell how, the rabbit was out of his graſp; the people in the entry ſaw it come, but could not ſtop it; through them all it went, and has never been ſeen again. But now to the proof of the witchcraft. The old woman, whom all ſuſpected, was laid up in her bed for three days afterwards, unable to walk about: all in conſequence of the kick ſhe had received in the ſhape of a white rabbit!"

At Shepton Mallet in this county of Somerſet, many ſingular ſcenes were enacted. In Glanvil's works we find that on Sunday, the 15th of November, 1657, Richard Jones, a young boy about twelve years old, was left in his father's houſe alone; ſuddenly he ſaw a witch, named Jane Brooks, whom he had never ſeen before. She aſked him for a piece of bread, and

in exchange gave him an apple, after which ſhe ſtroked him on the right ſide; and then, having exchanged mutual farewells, parted. An hour after this occurrence, his father Henry, accompanied with Gibſon, a couſin, returned home, found the lad ill and complaining of pains in the ſide. On the Monday following the boy roaſted his apple, and after eating a portion of it, was taken ill, accompanied with ſpeechleſneſs, he recovered, and was enabled to tell his father of the interview. Thereupon the father invited many of the women of Shepton to his houſe, ſo that the lad might ſelect the one who had injured him, and in caſe he became ſpeechleſs, he would touch his father on her appearance. Among the viſitors came Jane Brooks; on her entering the room the lad was taken ſo ill, that for ſome time he could not ſpeak, but gave the ſign agreed upon. The hag was often ſeen by her victim in company with Alice Coward, her ſiſter, as in a viſion; and on a certain Sunday afternoon, the child ſaid he ſaw Jane Brooks on the wall, and pointed to the place: Gibſon ſtruck at the place indicated with a knife, thereupon Richard exclaimed, 'O father, couſin Gibſon has cut Jane Brooks' hand, and it is

bloody.' On this they repaired to the conſtable, who was a diſcreet perſon, and acquainted him with what had paſſed, aſked him to go with them to Jane's houſe, which he did. On their arrival they found her ſitting in her room on a ſtool, with one hand over the other. The conſtable aſked her 'How ſhe did?' She anſwered 'Not well.' He alſo aſked her 'Why ſhe ſat with one hand over the other?' She replied 'She was wont ſo to do.' He then deſired to ſee her hand, but ſhe was very unwilling to ſhow it to him; but on doing ſo, he found it bloody, and on being aſked how it came ſo, ſhe ſaid, ''Twas ſcratched with a great pin.' On the 8th of December, in the ſame year, Jane Brooks, Alice Coward, and the boy appeared at Caſtle Cary before two juſtices of the peace, Mr. Hunt and Mr. Cary. The boy having begun to give his teſtimony, upon the coming in of the two women, was ſtruck ſpeechleſs, and remained ſo until the women were removed out of the room. On the 17th of February following he was examined before the magiſtrates at Shepton, many gentlemen and miniſters being preſent. The boy here fell into his uſual fits when he ſaw Jane Brooks, and remained motionleſs, but on

the witch touching him he inſtantly ſtarted up. One of the juſtices, to prevent all poſſibility of legerdemain, cauſed Gibſon and the reſt to ſtand away from the boy, who was blindfolded, and held him himſelf, the magiſtrate calling, as it were, on Jane Brooks to touch him, but gave a ſign that ſome one elſe ſhould do ſo, which was done, but without effect. The witch then touched him, which made the lad very violent. Anterior to this the two hags often appeared to him and told him that they had begun but could not finiſh; but if he would ſay nothing about it they would give him money, which they did, and rewarded him with twopence; after this they vaniſhed. The money was ſeen by many; and when it was put into the fire, and heated, the boy would fall ill, but on its being taken out and allowed to cool he recovered. After this many perſons heard in the boy a noiſe like the croaking of a toad, and a voice exclaiming 'Jane Brooks, Alice Coward.' He, too, was often moved about from place to place, and on one occaſion was ſeen hanging from a beam." On this concluſive evidence Jane Brooks was executed at Chard, March 26, 1658. Wincanton, in 1664, was the place where the confeſſion of Elizabeth Style was

heard. I am now abridging it from the *Sadduciſmus Triumphatus*. "The Devil," ſaid ſhe, "about ten years ſince appeared to me in the garb of a handſome man, and afterwards in the ſhape of a black dog. He promiſed me money and a long life, on the conditions of ſigning a bond with my blood, and handing my ſoul over to him, and permitting him to ſuck my blood when he deſired it. This I granted him after four ſolicitations, upon which he pricked the fourth finger of my right hand between the middle and upper joint. For this favour the Devil gave ſixpence, and vaniſhed with the paper. And ever after he often appeared to me in the ſhape of a man, dog, cat, or fly; and when I deſired to harm any one, I called the ſpirit by the name of Robin, and invoked him in the following manner: 'O, Satan, give me my purpoſe.' About a month before this trial I deſired to harm Elizabeth Hall, and to thruſt thorns into her fleſh; ſo accordingly a meeting was held on the common near Triſter Gate, where I met Alice Duke, Ann Biſhop, and Mary Penny; Alice Duke having brought a picture in wax, which was intended for Elizabeth Hill, to be baptized by Satan, who, appearing in black clothes,

performed the ceremony by anointing the effigy with oil, and ſaying, 'I baptize thee with oil, etc.;' then this figure was ſtruck through with thorns by all preſent. After which, they had wine, cakes, and roaſt meat provided by the 'gentleman in black.' When I wiſhed to injure man or beaſt, I made an image of the perſon or animal in wax, which muſt be baptized by the Devil, for even our power is limited by the will of the maſter." The belief of the country people in witches and wizards poſſeſſing the power of "overlooking" is not yet extinct; as I remember a well-known character, who was once denied admittance to a certain inn by the landlord, to have uttered curſes on the proprietor to ſuch an extent that the ale turned ſour in the cellar. However, the heat of the weather may have had ſomething to do with the liquor turning acid.

I venture, in concluſion, to give the picture of a witch, as ſketched by one of our dramatiſts.

"Through a cloſe lane as I purſued my journey,
I ſpied a wrinkled hag, with age grown double,
Picking dry ſticks, and mumbling to herſelf;
Her eyes with ſcalding rheum were galled and red,
And palſy ſhook her head; her hand ſeemed withered;
And on her crooked ſhoulder had ſhe wrapped

The tattered remnant of an old ſtriped hanging,
Which ſerved to keep her carcaſs from the cold.
So there was nothing of a piece about her.
Her lower weeds were all o'er coarſely patched
With different coloured rags — black, red, white, yellow,
And ſeemed to ſpeak variety of wretchedneſs.
I aſked her of the way, which ſhe informed me;
Then craved my charity, and bade me haſten
To ſave a ſifter."—T. OTWAY.

"Hiſtory to be true muſt condeſcend to ſpeak the language of Legend. The belief of the times is part of the record of the times."

LEGENDS.

Athelney.

NEAR to that ſpot where the rivers Thone and Parret meet, there is a beautiful tract of country, which ſtill retains its old Anglo-Saxon name of Athelney, now happily diverſified by corn fields and paſture land; but at the time of King Alfred it was otherwiſe, for then it was ſurrounded by marſhes, and ſo inacceſſible that no one could get near it but by a boat. Here King Alfred concealed himſelf in the hut of Denwulf, and offended his protectreſs, a tale which is written in every hiſtory-book. We will give Aſſer's account of it, for there is no doubt that he gave it nearly literally, as he heard it from King Alfred's own lips. It happened that on a certain day

the ruſtic wife of this man prepared to bake her bread; the King, ſitting then near the hearth, was making ready his bows and other warlike inſtruments, when the rough-tempered woman beheld the loaves burning at the fire. She ran haſtily and removed them, ſcolding the King, and exclaiming, "You man! you will not turn the bread you ſee burning, but you will be very glad to eat it when done." This incident was ſoon ſung in Latin verſe:

"Urere quos cernis panes, gyrare moraris,
Cum nimium gaudes hos manducare calentes."

"Ca'sn thee mind the ke-aks, man, an' dooſſen zee 'em burn?
I'm boun thee's eat 'em vaſt enough, az zoon az 'tiz the turn."

In memory of this concealment, a pillar, bearing the following inſcription, was erected by John Slade, Eſq., in 1801. "King Alfred the Great in the year of our LORD 879, having been defeated by the Danes, fled for refuge to the foreſt of Athelney, where he lay concealed from his enemies for the ſpace of a whole year. He ſoon after regained poſſeſſion of his throne, and in grateful remembrance of the protection he had received, under the favour of Heaven, he erected a monaſtery on this ſpot and endowed it with all the

lands in the Iſle of Athelney. To perpetuate the memorial of ſo remarkable an incident in the life of that illuſtrious prince, this edifice was founded by John Slade, Eſquire, of Manſell, the proprietor of Athelney, and Lord of the Manor of North Petherton, A. D. 1801."

While hiding here in this county, which only remained faithful to him, an incident occurred which I muſt not paſs over, for it is ſo peculiarly Chriſtian. In winter, when the king's company had gone out to procure proviſions, a poor man came to the door ſeeking alms. The Monarch, who was reading, ordered ſome bread to be given him; at this his mother objected, as there was but one loaf, which would not even ſuffice for themſelves. The King, however, ordered the beggar to receive the bread, telling the Queen to place her truſt in HIM who fed the five thouſand with five loaves and two fiſhes. After this he fell into a profound ſleep and had a viſion, in which he ſaw an old man, with black hair, clothed in ſacerdotal garments and wearing a mitre on his head, and claſping the book of the goſpels with his right hand. The aged one bleſſed Alfred, who aſked him who he

was. He replied, "I am called Cuthbert, the ſervant of CHRIST; to me didſt thou give alms: rejoice, my ſon; from henceforth I will be thy protector. Riſe up early in the morning, and ſound thy horn thrice, and thou ſhalt have five hundred men prepared for battle." With this he vaniſhed, and the King did as he was commanded; everything came to paſs as the ſaint had foretold.

Of the abbey which he founded, a ſad and ſhort tale is told of its firſt abbot, John, who was appointed by the King. On one dark night an attempt was made to aſſaſſinate him; two ſervants, hired by a certain prieſt and deacon, Gauls by birth, were ordered to lay in wait for the abbot, who was expected to pray on a certain night before the high altar; the latter came, and, on being aſſaulted, cried out, "Theſe men are devils, and not men." His attendants, hearing the cries, came to his reſcue; but the pious chronicler ſays that the doers of the ungodly deed were puniſhed by GOD in an awful manner. Near this monaſtery was found (1693) a remarkable jewel, uſually called the Alfred jewel, from the circumſtance of its having engraved on it, "Ælfred het meh gewircan." The

lower part is formed into a griffin's head; a ſmall tube iſſues from its mouth, croſſed in the interior by a ſmall pin of gold; this latter is intended to connect the ornament with the collar or band by which it was ſuſpended round the neck. Antiquarians have ſuppoſed the effigy depicted on it to repreſent the SAVIOUR, St. Cuthbert, or Pope Martin. But the opinion that it repreſented Alfred himſelf, ſymbolizing his kingly office, is as tenable as any of the theories yet advanced.

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Bath.

WITH this ancient city is connected the legend of Bladud; the ſtory is, that he, when a young man, being afflicted with leproſy, was baniſhed by Lud-Hudibras, his father, from court. Ere his departure from the land of his nativity, the queen gave him a ring, and enjoined him to preſerve it, ſo that it might ſerve as a token for future recognition, ſhould his diſeaſe ever be cured. Soon after his exile the prince exchanged clothing with a poor ſhepherd, and become the ſervant of a ſwineherd,

who reſided near the preſent Keynſham. Misfortune ſtill purſued him, the pigs entruſted to his care caught the leproſy, and Bladud, to keep this diſaſter from his maſter, drove them beyond the Avon, which he croſſed at Swinesford. One day, while he was praying to the morning ſun, and ſeeking by interceſſion to mitigate the wrath of heaven, his ſwine, as if ſeized with a frenzy, ruſhed madly up the valley, and plunged into the warm and oozy bog, which at that time covered the ſpot, where the ſanative ſprings of Bath burſt from their boiling fountains. For ſome time Bladud could not get his herd away; at laſt however, by dint of perſeverance and exceſſive hunger, combined with such a powerful attraction as a bag of acorns, which he ſhook before them, he contrived to overcome their obſtinacy. Having fixed on a convenient place, the anxious prince made diſtinct pens for his ſwine, concluding that by keeping them apart and clean the infectious diſeaſe would be ſooner eradicated; like a good phyſician he followed his own advice, and tried the ſame plan on himſelf, which led to a cure. The remainder of the ſtory is ſoon told, he returned to court where he exhibited the

ring to his mother, and was once more received into favour; after this he went to Athens, where, after ſtudying for eleven years, he returned to Britain and was choſen regent. In his old age he devoted himſelf to the formation of viſionary objects, and conſtructed a pair of wings, which, on his eſſaying to fly, proved a failure, for he broke his back after reigning twenty years. In Chriſtian times, a little legend is narrated of S. Elphege, the abbot of this city. Here he built a hermitage, in which he ſhut himſelf up, practiſing and preaching the moſt wonderful auſterity. The fame of his ſanctity brought many to his cell, and ſome leaving all worldly diſtractions placed themſelves under his diſcipline and direction, to learn of him the way of perfection, till at length they formed a large community. But even in this ſecluded ſpot, one was found among them who violated the rule of obedience which was rigidly inculcated by the ſaint. This crime did not paſs unpuniſhed, for the prime mover was ſnatched away by a ſudden and frightful death; and that all might know the cauſe of this judgment, the night after the burial of the monk, a great noiſe was heard in the place where the nocturnal meetings had

been held. The abbot, who was engaged in devotion in the adjoining cell, haſtened to the room, and found the dead brother lying on the floor and ſeveral demons ſcourging him with whips and fiery ſerpents, and reproaching him with taunts: "Nec tu Deo, nec nos tibi." S. Elphege returned to his cell ſad, and on the following day convened his brethren, and related to them the things which he had heard and ſeen, the narration of which influenced the participators in the guilt, to confeſs and forſake their ſins. The beautiful ſculpture of the weſt front of the Abbey is a portraiture of the dream of the good Biſhop, Oliver King (1496), who was tranſlated from Exeter. For happening to be at Bath, imagined, as he one night lay meditating in bed, that he ſaw the Holy Trinity, with angels aſcending and deſcending by a ladder, near to which there was a fair *olive* tree ſupporting a *king's crown;* the impreſſion was ſo ſtrong that the prelate thought he heard a voice which ſaid: "Let an olive eſtabliſh the crown, and let a king reſtore the church." The good work begun by Dr. King was completed by Dr. Montague at the inſtigation of Sir John Harrington. A ſtory is told of King James II, that when he

was once paſſing through this church, he halted by Waller's monument and ſtruck off the knight's noſe, as a mark of his deteſtation of him and his doings.

I can ſcarcely paſs from Bath without narrating the dream of Offa, King of Mercia, while reſiding here (794). Matthew of Weſtminſter is my authority. The king, after the labours of the day were over, retired to reſt, and whilſt ſleeping was warned by a divine oracle, which was announced by an angel, to take up out of the earth the relics of S. Alban, and to depoſit them in a more worthy repoſitory. Immediately the king obeyed the divine injunctions, and ſent for Humbert, Archbiſhop of Mercia, Ceowolf, Biſhop of Lindſey, and Unwin, Biſhop of Leiceſter, all of whom aſſembled at Verulamium. The king, as he went thither, ſaw a ray iſſuing from heaven like a huge torch, and deſcending like lightning towards the place where the holy martyr was laid. This miracle was beheld by all the "faithful," ſo that the king's viſion was more fully confirmed, for the place and memory of the martyr had been loſt entirely for about 340 years in conſequence of the expulſion of the Britons by the Saxons, Jutes,

and Angles. To make a long ſtory ſhort, the Archbiſhop Humbert raiſed the treaſure, which had been hidden for a long time beneath the turf, out of its ſepulchre; and in ſolemn proceſſion, ſinging praiſes and hymns, they transferred it to a church which had been conſecrated in honour of the holy protomartyr. The bones of this ſaint were replaced in a coffin made of gold, ſilver, and precious ſtones. Our chronicler goes on to ſtate that in this place, even in his own time, many wonders were wrought and in the ſight of many, hearing was reſtored to the deaf, the power of walking to the lame, ſight to the blind, to all thoſe who with faith implored the aſſiſtance and interceſſion of the bleſſed martyr.

Catcott.

With this place is connected one or two traditions, or rather popular beliefs. In the churchyard field are the remains of an old houſe now uſed as a barn, and it is commonly reported that the Duke of Monmouth ſlept here the night before his defeat at the battle of

Sedgmoor. Of courſe it is haunted; and connected with the same ſtory, a man's figure is ſaid to be often ſeen walking about without a head, in a field about a quarter of a mile from this place and adjoining Edington. A very curious ſuperſtition is held in this place, ſo I am informed by the vicar, namely, that killing or ill-treating a cat is looked upon with great horror; indeed, a man could not be found to kill one.

Congresbury.

CONGRESBURY derives its name from S. Cungar, ſon of the Emperor of Conſtantinople, who being warned by an angel to leave all and embrace the religious life, directed his courſe to this place, where he lived a life of great ſelf-denial and penance, mortifying his body, often (as tradition relates) remaining in cold water, in winter, for the ſpace of three paternoſters. This being done he came into his oratory, where he ſpent a great portion of his time in prayer. At three in the afternoon he ate barley bread, uſing no other food. On account of his ſanctity King Ina

beſtowed upon him all the little territory ſurrounding that village, ſecure from ſoldiers and from the viſits of the king, who did not wiſh to have this holy man diſturbed. It is alſo aſſerted that here SS. Fagan and Duvan, founded the ſee of Somerſetſhire, A.D. 167.

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Dundry.

TRADITION aſſerts the name of this pariſh to have originated with the architect of the towers of Chew Magna, Chewton Mendip, and Dundry; on the completion of the latter he is ſaid to have exclaimed: "Now I have *done dree.*"

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Exmoor Forest.

WITH Exmoor many legends are connected; the following very intereſting one is given by the talented author of *Lorna Doone*, by whoſe kind permiſſion I am allowed to incorporate it in this little work.

"In ancient times a mighty necromancer lived in the wilderneſs of Exmoor. Here, by ſpell and incanta-

tion, he built himſelf a ſtrong, high palace, eight-ſided like a ſpider's web, and ſtanding on a central ſteep; ſo that neither man nor beaſt could paſs the moor without his knowledge. If he wiſhed to rob and ſlay a traveller, or to have wild ox or ſtag for food, he had nothing to do than ſit at one of his eight windows and point his unholy book at him. Any moving creature at which that book was pointed must obey the call, and come from whatever diſtance, if ſighted once by the wizard. This was a bad condition of things, and all the country groaned under it; and Exmoor (although the moſt honeſt place that a man could wiſh to live in) was beginning to get a bad reputation, and all through that vile wizard. No man durſt even go to ſteal a ſheep or a pony, or ſo much as a deer for dinner, leſt he ſhould be brought to book by a far bigger rogue than he was.

And this went on for many years, though they prayed to GOD to abate it. But at laſt, when the wizard was getting fat and haughty upon his high ſtomach, a mighty deliverance came to Exmoor, and a warning, and a memory. For one day the ſorcerer gazed from his window facing the ſouth-eaſt of the

compaſs, and he yawned, having killed ſo many men, that now he was weary of it.

"Ifackins," he cried, or ſome ſuch oath, both profane and uncomely, "I ſee a man on the verge of the ſky-line, going along laborioufly. A pilgrim, I trow, or ſome ſuch fool, with the nails of his boots inſide them. Too thin to be worth eating: but I will have him for the fun of the thing; and moſt of theſe ſcouts have got money."

With theſe words he ſtretched forth his legs on a ſtool, and pointed the book of heatheniſh ſpells—back upwards—at the pilgrim. Now this good pilgrim was plodding along, ſoberly and religiouſly, with a pound of flints in either boot, and not an ounce of meat inſide him. He felt the ſpell of the wicked book, but only as a horſe might feel a "gee-wug!" addreſſed to him. It was in the power of this good man either to go on, or turn aſide and ſee out the wizard's meaning. And for a moment he halted and ſtood, like one in two minds about a thing. Then the wizard clapped one cover to, in a jocular and inſulting manner; and the ſound of it came to the pilgrim's ear, about five miles in the diſtance, like a great gun fired at him.

"By our Lady," he cried, "I muſt ſee to this; although my poor feet have no ſkin below them. I will teach this heathen miſcreant how to ſcoff at Glaſtonbury."

Thereupon he turned his courſe, and ploughed along through the moors and bogs, towards the eight-ſided palace. The wizard ſat on his chair of comfort; and with the rankeſt contempt obſerved the holy man ploughing towards him. "He has ſomething good in his wallet, I trow," ſaid the black thief to himſelf; theſe fellows get always the pick of the wine, and the beſt of a woman's money." Then he cried, "Come in, come in, good ſir," as he always ſaid to every one.

"Bad ſir, I will not come in," ſaid the pilgrim; "neither ſhall you come out again. Here are the bones of all you have ſlain; and here ſhall your own bones be."

"Hurry me not," cried the ſorcerer; "that is a thing to think about. How many miles haſt thou travelled this day?"

But the pilgrim was too wide awake; for if he had ſpoken of any number, bearing no croſs upon it, the necromancer would have had him, like a ball at bando-

play. Therefore he anſwered, as truly as need be, "By the grace of our Lady, nine."

Now nine is the croſſeſt of all croſs numbers, and full to the lip of all crotchets. So the wizard ſtaggered back, and thought, and inquired again with bravery, "Where can you find a man and wife, one going up-hill and one going down, and not a word ſpoken between them?"

"In a cucumber plant," ſaid the modeſt ſaint; bluſhing even to think of it. And the wizard knew he was done for.

"You have tried me with ungodly queſtions," continued the honeſt pilgrim, with one hand over his eyes, as he thought of the feminine cucumber; "and now I will aſk you a pure one. To whom of mankind have you ever done good, ſince GOD ſaw fit to make you?"

The wizard thought, but could quote no one: and he looked at the ſaint, and the ſaint at him, and both their hearts were trembling. "Can you mention only one?" aſked the ſaint, pointing a piece of the true croſs at him, hoping he might cling to it. "Even a little child will do: try to think of ſome one."

The earth was rocking beneath their feet, and the palace windows darkened on them with a tint of blood: for now the ſaint was come inſide, hoping to ſave the wizard.

"If I muſt tell the pure truth," ſaid the wizard, looking up at the arches of his windows, "I can tell of only one to whom I ever have done good."

"One will do; one is quite enough: be quick, before the ground opens. The name of one—and this croſs will ſave you. Lay your thumb on the end of it."

"Nay, that I cannot do, great ſaint. The devil have mercy upon me!"

All this while the palace was ſinking, and blackneſs coming over them.

"Thou haſt all but done for thyſelf," ſaid the ſaint, with a glory burning round his head; "by that laſt invocation. Yet give us the name of the one, my friend, if one there be, it will ſave thee, with the croſs upon thy breaſt. All is craſhing round us; dear brother, who is that one?"

"My own ſelf," cries the wretched wizard.

"Then there is no help for thee!" And with that

the honeſt ſaint went upward, and the wizard, and all his palace, and even the crag that bore it, ſank to the bowels of the earth; and over them was nothing left except a black bog fringed with reed of the tint of the wizard's whiſkers. The ſaint, however, was all right, after ſleeping off the excitement; and he founded a chapel, ſome three miles weſtward; and he lies there with his holy relic."

Glaſtonbury Abbey.

THIS Abbey is one of the moſt noted in the world, and the earlieſt ſanctuary of Our Lady in England. In ancient times to ſwear by the old church of Glaſtonbury was a pledge of ſincerity and earneſtneſs, and even when we behold this

> "Dear relic of a happier day,
> So lovely ſtill in its decay," *

our minds are impreſſed with a ſenſe of its former magnificence, and the actions of its mitred abbots riſe up in our memory, when thinking of the part they played in the annals of our country. The firſt

* *May Pageant.*

legend which engages our attention is one which will retain its hold on the hearts of men until the Second Advent. Often told, often diſproved, I will venture to tell it again: S. Joſeph of Arimathea, by the command of the angel Gabriel, left country, home, and kindred to preach the Goſpel here. He came not with the pomp of a king or ambaſſador, but accompanied with a few humble monks and the precious treaſure of the blood and water contained in two veſſels which he had preſerved when he waſhed Our Lord's ſacred body; ſo precious, indeed, that it is ſtated that it was entombed with him. After journeying up the hill—now called Weary-all Hill—he halted, and ſtruck his ſtick, which he had brought from Paleſtine, into the ground, and, like the rod of Aaron under the old diſpenſation, it burſt forth into floreſcence, budded, and became known ever after as the Holy Thorn. The ſpot where it ſtood is now marked by a flat ſlab, bearing the following inſcription:

I,A,, A.P.P.DXXXI.

Here it flouriſhed until the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when a zealous Puritan taking offence at the harmleſs

ſhrub, hewed down the largeſt of the two trunks—for it had a double trunk then—and would have no doubt proceeded to ſerve the other in like manner, if he had not been miraculouſly ſtopped by cutting his leg with the axe, and injuring his eyes by the chips flying into them. Another attack was made on the tree by a military man in the reign of Charles I: whether the ſame accidents befell him tradition ſaith not. The flowering of the tree on Chriſtmas Day is noted in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for in the year 1753 the people were under ſome embarraſſment as to dates, owing to the changes made in the calendar. A vaſt number of perſons attended the noted thorn, on Chriſtmas Day, new ſtyle, but, to their diſappointment, there were no ſymptoms of its blooming. So they watched it narrowly until the 5th of January, the Chriſtmas Day of the old ſtyle, when, true to tradition, it bloomed once again. I muſt not omit the Walnut Tree which ſtood near St. Joſeph's Chapel, for with this there is ſomething peculiar in its not budding until the Feaſt of S. Barnabas. Dr. Montague, Biſhop of Bath and Wells, was ſo intereſted in theſe trees that he thought a branch of them worthy the acceptance of Queen

Anne and King James and his Queen. The Chapel of the Virgin was built in the firſt place of boughs and twigs. Subſequently it was rebuilt of ſtone, and another chapel added. In 530, after the Synod of Victory, S. David, accompanied by ſeven of his ſuffragans, came hither, attracted by the ſanctity of the place, determined to ſolemnly conſecrate the chapel to Our Lady; but the night before the day appointed for this ceremony, CHRIST appeared to him, and bade him deſiſt, ſaying that He had Himſelf performed the holy rite; and to make the viſion poſſeſs proofs of its reality He with His finger pierced the hands of the Archbiſhop, promiſing that on the morrow when, during the maſs, the words "*Per Ipſum, et cum Ipſo, et in Ipſo*," were ſaid, his hands ſhould be healed. The next morning came, and all who were preſent ſaw and touched the prodigious wounds, which during the celebration of the maſs were cured when the above cited words were uttered. Twelve years after, the nephew of S. David was, by his own requeſt, carried to this place (where his Excalibur, inſcribed with

"Ich am y-hole Exalibore,
Unto a King fair treſore,"

was forged), to be cured of his wounds and to prepare for death; certainly a ſuitable place, for there

> "Falls not hail, or rain, or any ſnow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly, but it
> Lies deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns,
> And bowery hollows crowned with ſummer ſea." *

And here, too, in the ſhady valley in which Endymion ſinks to ſleep, the thought of the renewed life expected by the ancient Britons for their Arthur, like that in ſtore for Memnôn, or Sarpêdôn and Adonis ſhowed itſelf in the epitaph—

> "Hic iacet Arthurus, rex quondam rexque futurus."

S. Dunſtan, too, of whom many miracles, or rather "glorious ones," are related, as Matthew of Weſtminſter ſays, is connected with Glaſtonbury. Here they commenced; for God, ſays the ancient chronicler, indicated by a pleaſing prodigy his future holineſs, by ſhowing to his mother, what ſhould be the future of her ſon. On the day of the purification of the Bleſſed Virgin (2nd February), while ſhe was with her huſband in the Abbey, all the people of the place being preſent with their tapers lighted, and the prieſt

* Tennyson's *King Arthur.*

being ſolemnly adorned, according to cuſtom, with the veſtments, and ready for the office of the altar, ſuddenly, whether it was chance or the act of God, I know not, the candles of all preſent were extinguiſhed. Then, when all were amazed, the wax taper of the mother of Dunſtan ſuddenly rekindled; and ſo ſhe, giving light to all the reſt, reſtored cheerfulneſs. Here in his cell in after life,

> "S. Dunſtan, as the ſtory goes,
> Once pulled the Devil by the noſe
> With red-hot tongs, which made him roar,
> That he was heard three miles or more."

The Devil appearing in the ſhape of a beautiful female to tempt him. The tongs, too, are ſaid to be in exiſtence with which he performed the deed, at Mayfield. A picture illuſtrating this ſtory can ſtill be ſeen over the fireplace in the Goldſmiths' Hall; the Saint is the patron of the company. Two ſcenes are preſented on the ſame canvas. The one in the background repreſenting the Saint pinching the Devil by the noſe; the other, the ſame holy man in adoration of the Bleſſed Virgin. C. R. Williams, Eſq., informs me that the name of the artiſt is unknown. The Rev. R. A. Taylor, M. A., writes to me as follows:

"Touching the Legend of S. Dunſtan taking the Enemy by the noſe, may there be an allegory in the ſtory? viz., that the Saint by his energy had done much to injure the cauſe of error. This obſervation may alſo explain the legend of Luther throwing an inkſtand at the Devil." The noſe of Satan is not of Roman, Grecian, Jewiſh, or celeſtial type, but partly cogitative, partly ſnub. This was not the only prank the Devil played the Saint; for, on the death of King Edmund, he danced before him.

The manner of the election, or rather promotion, of S. Dunſtan to the Abbacy of Glaſtonbury and the Primacy of Canterbury has given riſe to legends. Edmund having been appointed King on the death of Athelſtan, commanded Dunſtan to be preſent at his councils, ſo that he was to be accounted as a royal prince. Of courſe he had his traducers and diſparagers. The King, without well inquiring into the matters, at once ordered him to be deprived of all honour and of the chancellorſhip too. On a certain day, the King went forth with his train to relieve his melancholy by hunting near this Abbey. He followed a hart of immenſe ſize, which was driven by the hounds

over a precipitous ſide of an abrupt hill, and in the hot purſuit the King followed and nearly loſt his life; for his horſe was unmanageable, in conſequence of a hard mouth; and the King unable to reſtrain him, although on the verge of a precipice, had the preſence of mind to commend his ſoul to GOD, and to die in charity with all. The King's words were, "I do not recollect that I of late have injured any one except Dunſtan; and this fault I will amend by reconciling myſelf to him if time is allowed me." At theſe words, in conſequence of the merits of the bleſſed man, the horſe ſtopped on the extreme edge of the precipice; and ſo the King was ſaved. He was reconciled to S. Dunſtan, and committed to him the charge of the Abbey. "Be thou," he ſaid, "the moſt faithful abbot of this ſeat and of this church; and if you find anything wanting for the complete ſervice of our holy religion, I will ſupply that out of my royal treaſures."

The election to the Archbiſhopric was almoſt as ſingular as his promotion to the Abbacy. Ælfeg, Biſhop of the city of Weſtminſter, being dead, King Edred wiſhed to appoint S. Dunſtan to the vacant ſee. I have extracted from Matthew of Weſtminſter the

viſion which induced him to accept the regal offer. The King treated with him by the agency of his mother. Dunſtan replied, "I beſeech you, O lady, to ceaſe petitions of this nature, and be aſſured that I will not be biſhop in the time of your ſon." The man of GOD ſaid this becauſe he loved the King, and was unwilling to abſent himſelf from his councils becauſe of the duties of the office. But on the following night he had a viſion, in which he ſeemed to have gone to Rome, and after worſhipping at the tombs of the apoſtles, to have returned; and when he had come to the Mount of Joy, S. Peter met him, with the apoſtles SS. Paul and Andrew, offering him their ſwords which they held in their hands. On the ſword of S. Peter was written—"In the beginning was the Word." The ſwords of SS. Paul and Andrew were inſcribed with their own names. Then S. Peter ſang to him ſweetly, "Take my yoke upon you, and you ſhall find reſt for your ſouls." Then reproving him, he lifted up the rod which he held in his hand, and ſtruck him gently on the hand, ſaying, "Take this as a warning not to perſiſt any longer in refuſing the yoke of the LORD." On this

the man of GOD awoke, and in the morning narrated the viſion to the King, who wondered at it. The King took upon himſelf to interpret the dream. "As the words which you have received by the favour of the apoſtles, denote the armour of the HOLY SPIRIT, you may know for certain by the ſword of S. Peter, inſcribed as it is by the Word of GOD, that you are to be preſented, by heavenly intervention, with the dignity of Archbiſhop; by the ſword of S. Paul you may know that you will receive a mere biſhopric, and by the ſword of S. Andrew that you will receive another biſhopric, over which you are to exerciſe the right of government. And afterwards, in accordance with the interpretation of his dream, he ruled the church of Canterbury, which was dedicated to the Holy Trinity, the church of London, dedicated to S. Paul, and that of Rocheſter, conſecrated in the name of the bleſſed Andrew. On the death of King Edred, S. Dunſtan was appriſed of it, by angels ſinging in the air, "King Edred has gone to his reſt in peace."

King Athelſtan, determining to ſeek all the relics of the different ſaints throughout his realm, went to the monaſtery of Glaſtonbury; and here he found

Elfleda, who had choſen an abode near the weſtern ſide of the monaſtery. She, hearing that the King was coming, prepared a dinner. The ſervants of the king's houſehold (knowing that the King had granted to his niece an exemption from the obligation of receiving travellers, ſo that ſhe might attend to her meditations) came the day before to ſee that all things were ready for their lord's reception, on inſpection they diſcovered that mead was wanting. They accordingly told Elfleda, who replied, "The Mother of my Lord JESUS CHRIST will never permit mead to be wanting at the table of the King." Afterwards ſhe entered into the church of the Mother of GOD, and proſtrated herſelf in prayer to GOD and to His Mother. The King came accompanied with a numerous retinue of ſervants, and after the celebration of maſs he was invited to dinner, and went in accordingly. But, at the firſt paſſing of the cup, the greedy drinkers emptied the veſſel, leaving only a ſmall quantity at the bottom. GOD, however, increaſed the liquor, which for the whole day was found ſufficient for the whole company. The King was told of the miracle by one of the ſervants, who was vexed, and ſaid, "We have ſinned

too much in vexing this ſervant of GOD by our exceſſive ſuperfluity."

In later times tradition relates that the abbot's kitchen owed its origin to a controverſy between Henry VIII and the Abbot, when the former threatened to burn the kitchen, thereby inſinuating a reproach for his gluttony and luxurious manner of living, to which the Abbot laughingly replied that he would erect ſuch an one that all the wood in the royal foreſts ſhould not ſuffice to accompliſh that threat, and forthwith erected the preſent one. This tradition is very incorrect, for the preſent building proves that it was built anterior to the time of Henry VIII.

—oo—

Halswell House.

THE ſeat of the Tynte family, of whoſe anceſtors I have gleaned the following. The firſt Tynte, a young knight of the Arundel family, fought bravely at the ſiege of Aſcalon, riding down the Saracens till the white houſings of his noble ſteed were bordered crimſon with the blood of the *miſcreants*. The King, Richard

Cœur de Lion, obſerving him hewing among the Moſlem ſabres, declared that the maiden knight had borne himſelf like a lion, and had done work enough for ſix cruſaders; for which ſervice to the Chriſtian cauſe, he conferred on him for armorial bearings, a lion *argent* on a field *gules*, between ſix croſſlets of the firſt, and motto—"*Tynctus cruore Saraceno.*"

Yaſelbury Plucknett.

HERE in ancient times dwelt S. Wulfric, a native of Letona,* a place ſituated about eight miles from Briſtol. When he had arrived to man's eſtate, he entered into holy orders, and having been made prieſt when young and heedleſs too of the perfection to which his holy calling obliged him, he paſſed his time in a manner not at all ſuitable to his vocation, following hunting, hawking, and other worldly diverſions. One day, while following the chaſe, he was admoniſhed by ſome unknown perſon, who, clad in the garb of a beggar,

* I am unable to give the modern name of Letona; many places near Briſtol might claim the birthplace of the Saint, if it were decided by conjecture.

aſked alms of him; henceforth he left the world and led a life of penance: firſt in the family of William, lord of the town in which he was born, and to whom he acted as chaplain; then afterwards in the pariſh of Haſelbury, where he led a life of auſterity in a cell adjoining to the church dedicated to S. Michael. His faſts were continual, inſomuch that he reduced his body to a ſkeleton, paſſing nights without ſleep; and even the little reſt he had was marred and rendered painful by leaning his head againſt the wall. His food was oaten bread and water-gruel; his clothing mean, under which he wore a hair ſhirt, and afterwards an iron coat of mail, which was given to him by the knight, his old maſter and patron. In the ſharp winter ſeaſon he was accuſtomed to caſt himſelf into a large veſſel of cold water, from which he would not come out until he had recited the whole pſalter; yet with all this rigour he was humble and affable to all who came to him, to whom (although for the moſt part unſeen) he gave excellent advice and leſſons of piety. He ſuffered, like another S. Anthony, great and violent perſecutions from Satan and his infernal ſpirits, not only by interior temptations, but alſo ſcourgings and

other external aſſaults. His patience and conſtancy was proof againſt all Satanic influences, and eventually by his perſeverance was enabled to exorciſe thoſe who were under the dominion of the power of darkneſs. It is related that a man, having ſold himſelf to the Devil, repented of his bargain, endeavoured to viſit the ſaint, but when he came near the village, and was in the act of fording the ſtreams, the enemy of ſouls would not allow him to proceed, but held him in the water and almoſt ſuffocated him; which, when the man of GOD, knowing it by divine revelation, ſent his own confeſſor to him armed with the croſs, and bearing holy water with which he ſprinkled the poor man, and ſo brought him to S. Wulfric, who, after hearing his confeſſion, diſmiſſed him in peace.

This ſaint poſſeſſed alſo the ſpirit of prophecy, and foretold that Stephen ſhould be king, and that the religious houſe of the order of Canons which had been founded by Walter, lord of Haſelbury, ſhould not proſper, he is ſaid to have uttered the following words: "Incipies ſed non conſummabis collegium canicorum apud Haſelberge; neque enim hi quos introducere diſponis proſperabuntur in loco iſto." Of his miracles

it is recorded that he changed water into wine, and at another time by his benediction fed forty perſons with one ſmall loaf; many, too, were healed by water bleſſed by him. His coat of mail coming down to his knees hindered his genuflecting; after conſultation with the knight how to remedy this inconvenience, the latter adviſed him to ſend the armour to London to be cut ſhorter, but the good man did not wiſh this; therefore praying to GOD, he deſired Sir William to cut the mail with a pair of ſciſſors, which he did, cutting through the iron with as much eaſe as if it had been cloth. Many were the rings made of the iron thus cut off, and great miracles were ſaid to have been done by the application of them to diſeaſed bodies. On another occaſion a mouſe, gnawing at his cape (cappa)* was reprimanded by the ſaint, the little animal ran to his feet and expired. A boy was commiſſioned on one occaſion to bring him three loaves, but inſtead of doing ſo, kept two, which were turned into ſtones by S.

* Many of these legends I gleaned from the *Acta Sanctorum*. I tranſlate the word cappa as cape. Cappa, cape, cope, coppe, being ſynonyms for a part of a monk's dreſs. In an old author I read—

> "His cope that biclypped him wel clene was it folden,
> Of double worſtede y-dyght; doun to the hele."
>
> *Peres the Ploughmans Crede.*

Wulfric; afterwards confeſſing his guilt, by the pious interceſſion of the hermit the ſtones were changed into bread again. The cell in which he lived was draughty—the wind often extinguiſhed the candles, much to the diſcomfit of the ſaint; the whole church adjacent to his cell was illuminated to give him light. As the hour of diſſolution drew near, he was forewarned of it by God, and calling for his confeſſor, told him that on the following Saturday he muſt die, which accordingly came to paſs in the year 1154, and was buried in his cell, and would no doubt have remained there until this day, only for the monks of Montacute, who wiſhed his body and relics to be given to them; but Oſberne, the pariſh prieſt, would not allow this, but transferred them to the church of Haſelbury. Mr. Baring Gould, in ſpeaking of this ſaint, errs, I think, in placing his relics in the church of Haſelbury Bryan, in Dorſetſhire; for in the former church, from time immemorial, a ſide aiſle, now uſed as a baptiſtery, has borne the name of S. Wulfric.

Hinton Blewett.

At this place is a wooded gorge in the hill-ſide through which runs a ſmall ſtream, which is called "Haydon's Gully." A gentleman named Col. Haydon, who was accuſed of high treaſon, uſed to ſpend his nights under his brother's roof, and in the morning came and backed his horſe into a hole in the bank.

—oo—

Keynsham

Derives its name from S. Keyna, daughter of Braghan, prince of Wales, who has left his name to Brecknockſhire, and was happy in an offspring of ſaints. One of the moſt famous was S. Keyna, ſurnamed by the Welſh "The Virgin," who lived a recluſe near this town: tradition aſſerts that the ſpiral ſtones in the ſhape of ſerpents found in our county were originally ſerpents turned into ſtone by her prayers. The "Stantes Lapides" of Stanton Drew have alſo been aſcribed to her, but on what authority I know not. Dr. Fergusſon quotes two authors who relate it, namely Stukeley and Bathurſt Deane.*

* *Archæologia* xxv, p. 189; and *Rude Stone Monuments*, p. 181.

Here in this ſolitude the Holy Virgin paſſed her life, and was found by S. Cadoc, who wiſhed her to accompany him home, but the inhabitants would not allow it. However, ſome time after, the ſaint, admoniſhed by an angel, returned to the place of her nativity, and there, on the ſummit of a lofty mountain, ſhe took up her abode, obtaining a ſpring of water by her interceſſion. Here ſhe remained for many years, practiſing wonderful auſterity until the time of her diſſolution, of which ſhe was warned by a viſion, in which ſhe ſaw a pillar of fire reſting on her bed (the bare pavement ſtrewn over with a few branches of trees); and two angels, who ſeemed to take off her hair cloth, and to clothe her with fine garments warning her to make herſelf ready for the marriage-feaſt of the Lamb. On awaking, ſhe found herſelf in a fever, which ſhe regarded as the precurſor of death, which ſoon took place. During her laſt moments ſhe was comforted by angels; and ſo ſweet a fragrance proceeded from her body, that the byſtanders ſeemed to be in Paradiſe. At Keynſham alſo, Bladud kept his ſwine, ere he found out the virtues of the hot ſprings of Bath.

Minehead.

"THE queen of Engliſh watering-places"—I am uſing the words of a friend—is not lacking in a tale of horror. Sir W. Scott ſays, in *Rokeby*,

"How whiſtle raſh bids tempeſts roar,"

which is illuſtrated by the ſuperſtition of ſailors on hearing a whiſtle at ſea. The moſt formidable whiſtler on record was Mrs. Leakey, who, in 1636, reſided at this town; her only ſon drove a conſiderable trade between that port and Waterford. This good old dame was of an amiable diſpoſition, and proved ſo acceptable a companion to her friends that they were accuſtomed to ſay to her and to each other, it were a pity ſuch an excellent, good-natured old lady ſhould die. To this ſhe was wont to reply, that whatever pleaſure they might find in her company now, they would not greatly like to ſee her or converſe with her after death. After this event had taken place, ſhe began to appear to various perſons by night and day—ſometimes in one place, ſometimes in another—now in her own houſe, now in the fields—ſea and land were not free from her viſits. Her character was changed,

her urbanity had departed, and it is on record that ſhe kicked a M.D. for his negligence in omitting to hand her over a ſtyle; a neglect which ſeems to me to be quite pardonable. She had a habit of appearing on the quay, and calling for a boat. She perſecuted her ſon ſo much that he was ruined; for when a veſſel of his approached the ſhore, her whiſtle was heard, and the ſea would be agitated with ſtorms and tempeſts, which did incredible damage to the ſhipping. After having acted in this horrible way, ſhe appeared to her daughter-in-law while dreſſing, who got rid of her mother-in-law by ſending her to an Iriſh prelate, then noted for his crimes and miſhaps, to exhort him to repentance and to amend his faults, in order that he might avoid the gallows. The biſhop was, however, hard-hearted, and told her that if he was born to be hanged he ſhould not be drowned.

Monkgilver.

In the ſouth aiſle (a very pretty Perpendicular addition to the pariſh church), in the heads of the windows, a hammer, nail, pincers, horſeſhoe, and buttreſs, are

delineated. The villagers tell you that a blackſmith in that place, once on a time ſent to Briſtol for a hundredweight of iron, and in due courſe of time received a ponderous bag, which he imagined to be the article ſent for, but, on examination, turned out to be gold. How the miſtake gave him the right to the property, hiſtory ſaith not; but having appropriated it, he built this aiſle, and ſet the implements of his trade in the windows as a memorial of the fact.

—oo—

Norton Fitzwarren.

On the hill-ſide above the beautiful little church, riſes an old earthwork, with a ditch and ramparts, encloſing an area of thirteen acres. The *local legend* is that an enormous ſerpent—"the loathy worm" of ancient ballads, once dwelt at Conqueſt, and devaſtated the ſurrounding country. Its ravages are ſuppoſed to be portrayed in the carving of the wood ſcreen of the pariſh church dedicated to All Saints. It is very difficult to account for this univerſal legend, unleſs we trace it back to the primeval time when great lizard monſters occupied the earth with man. This place

was once a Britiſh town, as its name ſhows: Ner-ton, North-ton, Nether-ton, or Near-ton. A local diſtich ſtill maintains the fact:

> "When Norton was a market town,
> Taunton was a furzy down."

It is, in fact, to Taunton what Old Sarum is to Saliſbury—grandfather. Perhaps ſome outlaw Britiſh chieftain of early days, fortreſſed himſelf here, and tormented the neighbourhood by impoſing "black-mail."

Sedgmoor.

THE Rev. H. Alford, in vol. x, page 320, of *Notes and Queries*, writes as follows:

"I think the following may not be without intereſt to your readers. I had occaſion to conſult the regiſters at Weſton-Zoyland, and at the end of one of them found this memorandum:

'Ann Account of the Ffight that was in Langmore, the Six of July 1685, between the King's Army and the D. of M.

'The Iniadgement began between one and two of the clock in the morning. It continued near one hour and a halfe. There was kild upon the ſpott of the King's ſouldiers, ſixteen; ffive of them buried in the churchyard, and they had all Chriſtian buriall. One hundred or more of the King's ſouldiers wounded; of which wounds many died, of which wee

have no certain account. There was kild of the rebels upon the ſpot aboute 300; hanged with us 22, of which 4 were hanged in gemmarek.* Aboute 500 priſoners brought into our church, of which there was 79 wounded, and 5 of them died of their wounds in our church.'

'The D. of M. beheaded
July 15th. A.D., 1685.'

"I alſo found in the churchwardens' account for 1686, the following entries:

	£.	s.	d.
'Item exp'd upon the ringers the 6 of July in remembrance of the great deliverance we had upon that day, in the year 1685 - - - - - - -	0	7	0
'It. pd Ben Page, John Keyſer, etc., for ringing when the King was in the more - - - - - -	0	5	0
'It. pd. (etc. etc.) for taking up the glaxes which was laid over brod ryne when the King was in the more -	0	1	6
'It. pd. Ben Page for nailes uſed about the glaxes -	0	0	8
'It. expended then in beere, and the next day when the King came through Culſton - - - - - -	0	8	10
'It. pd. Richard Board for carrying the glaxe down to brod ryne - - - - - - - - -	0	1	10'

"What the glaxe is, no one can tell me, nor is any ſuch word known to the weſtern people.† One of

* I have written to many antiquarians reſpecting this word. The moſt feaſible is a ſolution given by Profeſſor Morley. He concurs with me in thinking that gemmarek means "chains." He wrote as follows: "'The four hung in gemmarek were certainly four hung in chains or 'hung in gimmaces'—a Somerſetſhire expreſſion. The word is from a root that implies coupling, as in the 'gimmel ring;' and another form of it was gimmer, as in 'gimmer tree,' a tree growing double from its roots; ſo that your word might be formed from it, the c and s may have been like enough to r and k to cauſe the word gemmaces to be read like gemmarek."—C. H. P.

† Glaxe here evidently means a bridge. I am unable to trace this word, and ſhould be glad to receive any ſuggeſtions reſpecting it.—C. H. P.

our family, Richard Alford, was churchwarden in the year of the battle; and there is a legend in the family, that he, being a Monmouthite, thereby ſaved himſelf by bringing out to a party of the king's ſoldiers a jug of cider, with the king's head on it, and thereby eſcaping queſtion.

"It does not appear from Macaulay that the King viſited Sedgmoor the year after the battle; but from theſe entries it muſt have been ſo." *

—oo—

Shapwick.

HERE S. Indractus with his ſiſter Druſa and his companions were martyred. For on their return from Rome, and directing their journey towards Glaſtonbury, with the intention of viſiting the tomb of their patron, S. Patrick, who was buried here (*Vide* William of Malmeſbury), on the road they filled their pilgrims' wallets with millet and other ſeeds, which they intended carrying with them to Ireland, and bearing at the ſame time ſtaves tipped with braſs. They were

* Lord Macaulay does not mention the fact of James II viſiting this battlefield. Yet we know that he made a tour to ſome of the neighbouring counties (1686), and probably did viſit this county.—C. H. P.

obſerved by a party of ſervants in the retinue of King Ina, who was holding his court at Pedret, who ſuppoſed them to be laden with bags of gold, and thinking that their ſtaves were ornamented with the ſame metal, conſpired to ſlay them. One of them—Hona—more wicked than the reſt, coveting the ſuppoſed booty, induced his companions to follow them, with the deſign of getting poſſeſſion of the treaſure, and coming up with them at Shapwick, entered the houſe where they were ſleeping, murdered the party, and afterwards caſt their bodies into a pit. Capgrave relates that a pillar of light from heaven was obſerved overhanging the place of interment for three nights, by which miraculous portent their bodies were diſcovered, and ſo by King Ina were transferred to the Abbey of Glaſtonbury. William of Worceſter, however, mentions that S. Indractus was buried in the pariſh church of Shepton Mallet with a hundred companions. A ſtory is told by an old author* that the murderers were preſent at the burial, and were ſo tormented by devils that they tore their own fleſh with their teeth, and ſo miſerably ended their lives.

* *Capgrave.*

Shepton Mallet.

WITH this town is connected the hiſtory of Nancy Camel, who lived in ſome period of hiſtory either never aſcertained or ſo remote that time has effaced all traces from mortal memory. Tradition, however, relates, for the benefit of poſterity, that when the manufacture of ſtockings formed a portion of the daily work of its inhabitants, and when old and young worked their fingers to the bone to obtain money, there lived an old lady of the above name in the neighbouring woods, and was of courſe accounted a witch, or wiſe woman. Regarded as an object of ridicule, if not of dread, ſhunned by her own ſex, and without kit or kin; in her ſecluſion and retirement ſhe laboured at her ſtockings unceaſingly—Sundays not excepted—and here ſhe mourned over the bitterneſs of her wretched life. In the midſt of her ſolitude, ſhe, too, is viſited by the evil one. What tranſactions paſſed between them, hiſtory relates not—the reſult of the interview never tranſpired; perhaps ſhe broke, like many of her companions in ſorcery, the compact duly ſigned and ſealed to deliver over her ſoul to her lord

and maſter for favours conferred. However, one evening after a moſt ſultry day, the dark clouds gathered, and terminated the day with gloom; thunder filled the ſky, accompanied, too, by the flaſh of vivid lightning. As night drew on, ſo the fury of the elements increaſed. In the midſt of the ſtorm was heard a loud and piercing ſhriek, that faintly echoed till the morning broke; there, too, was heard, the cracking of a whip and the creaking of wheels. Morn came at laſt, calm and glorious after the ſtorm; ſome perſons, half ſuſpecting the cauſe of the ſhrieks they had heard, and half out of curioſity to ſee how Nancy had fared, viſited the ſpot. She was gone: ſhe had vaniſhed in the night; and the traces of wheels and the impreſſion of hoofs, engraven as by a miracle in the hard rock, unveiled the horrible manner of her abduction. The remains of "Nancy Camel's Hole," with the myſterious marks upon the roof in front of the cave—ſimply natural formations—are ſtill pointed out to the wondering curious.

There is a tragic hiſtory connected with Cannard's Grave; a place well known to the inhabitants of Shepton, as a patch of dreary, woe-begone looking

buildings, whoſe beſt days have paſſed. Originally, the old, lofty, ghoſtlike edifice, with wide arch and folding portal, was the hoſtelry; which inn, no doubt, could bear witneſs to many a ſcene of gambling, ſmuggling ſchemes, and profanity. Giles Cannard, a thriving man, was its landlord; but, alas! his thrift brought no bleſſing, for it was obtained by queſtionable proceedings; his love of gold urged him to the committal of a forgery, which was eventually diſcovered, and the proſpect of ruin led him to commit ſuicide; and here on this ſpot of ſolitude and deſolation did his body find a reſting-place: the ſoul, nevertheleſs, did not reſt, but troubled the earth, and viſited the ſcenes of its former abode while in the fleſh. This fact is mentioned by the Rev. H. Allen, rector of Shepton in 1692, in his account of the pariſh bounds. Many conjectures have been made concerning the derivation of the words Cannard's Grave. One derivation I have ſeen quoted, ſtating that graeſ, or grave, did not always mean a place of interment, but was a common affix, ſignifying grove or wood, and even cave. Kinehard was the name of an Anglo-Saxon prince to whom this property may have belonged, and which,

when he was killed by the partizans of Kenulph, came into the hands of the monks of Glaſtonbury. Another derivation, which I think is the correct one, is this: that this place was the *kineherd's grove*, where the ſhepherd or herdsman was accuſtomed to collect his kine for milking.

—oo—

Somerton.

With this ancient town is connected the legendary ſtory of King Ina. I am indebted to one of the earlier publications of the Camden Society for it; it is intereſting as affording a good ſpecimen of Anglo-Saxon fiction, and is to my mind almoſt as romantic as the Spaniſh tale of King Vamba and Queen Sancha.*

"Formerly there were two kings reigning in England —one beyond the Humber, the other on this ſide of it. It happened that the king who reigned on this ſide of the Humber, the number of his days being completed, went the way of all fleſh. He left no heir behind him, whereupon, in the kingdom which he had governed, there aroſe a ceſſation of the adminiſtration of juſtice, and with it injuſtice; ſo that no room was left either

* *Vide Spanish Stories*, by the author of *Traditions of Tirol.*

for peace or equity. The unjuſt man condemned the juſt; the ſtrong oppreſſed the weak; and the more powerful a man was, the more injurious was he to his neighbour. What more? Thus the want of an heir to the kingdom brought a miſerable deſolation; which, beholding, the biſhops and clergy, perſons of the realm deſirous to obtain a king to reign over them, conſulted the LORD at London. The reply they received was, that they ſhould ſeek out a man whoſe name was Ina, and make him king. When the chief men of the realm heard this, they immediately deſpatched many meſſengers in every direction who ſhould ſeek out this perſon called Ina, and bring him to them; who, when they had ſought him for a long time without ſucceſs, a party of them, who had been inquiring in the weſtern provinces, namely in Cornwall and Devonſhire, were returning, wearied in ſpirit, and directing their courſe towards London. Theſe men, as they were travelling through the provinces, and had arrived at a certain town which is called Somerton, chanced to ſee there a certain huſbandman with his plough, who, with a loud voice, was calling out for 'Ina,' that he might come with the oxen of his father, who was a partner of the

huſbandman. The meſſengers hearing this, inquired of the huſbandman what he was calling, who replied, that he had called for Ina, the ſon of his partner, that he ſhould come with his father's oxen. As ſoon as the meſſengers had ſeen Ina, and perceived that he was a handſome youth, tall and robuſt, they rejoiced with exceeding joy. 'This,' ſaid they, 'is he of whom we are in ſearch.' When they expreſſed their deſire to take him with them, they were not ſuffered to do ſo by the father, nor yet by the neighbours, without giving a pledge and ſecurity that no harm ſhould happen to him while he was in their hands. This being done, they brought him to London, to the chiefs and nobles of the realm, who, when they ſaw Ina—a young man, very handſome, and, as it ſeemed, very brave—they made him king, committing to him all the kingdom and all belonging to it; and he was immediately conſecrated by the biſhops.

"While theſe things were ſcarcely concluded, there came one who told the king, that the king on the other ſide of the Humber had lately died, leaving an only daughter his heir, whoſe name was Adelburgh. When the king heard this he ſent a royal embaſſy to

Adelburgh, with propoſals of marriage, and that their two realms ſhould be united in one monarchy. But Adelburgh, when ſhe had received the propoſal, deſpiſed it, and ſpurned the thoughts of marriage with the king, becauſe it was ſaid he was the ſon of a huſbandman. King Ina, when he received this reply, thinking that he himſelf ſhould have better ſucceſs, determined to go in perſon; and pretending that he was a meſſenger of the king, came to Adelburgh, and repeated the propoſals which before had been made to her. But ſhe, nevertheleſs, as before, rejected the propoſal on the ground that the king's father was a huſbandman; which, when the king heard, thinking anxiouſly what he ſhould do, that by ſome means or other he might ſucceed, he determined to remain with her ſome days and even months in the character of a ſervant waiting upon her.

"Now it happened that Adelburgh appointed a feaſt to be held for the chief perſons of her realm. Ina, on the day of the feſtival, had the office aſſigned him by his miſtreſs of placing the diſhes on the table at the banquet. While he was performing this duty, being dreſſed in royal apparel, and appearing to far

greater advantage than the other perſons who were preſent, the lady, again and again admiring him, fell in love with him, and gave him apartments in her own houſe. In a ſecret interview, Ina again opened his embaſſy to Adelburgh. He could not, however, prevail to be heard until, at length, he declared to her who he was, and that he himſelf was the king; when ſhe, wondering exceedingly at what had happened, was amazed, and with hearty goodwill acquieſced in his propoſal. This being ſettled, the king departed; and, being returned into his own country, ſent a ſplendid embaſſy to conduct the lady to him. When ſhe arrived at the town which then was called Cideſton, but now Wells, they were there ſolemnly married."

Wansdyke.

THIS remarkable entrenchment is partly in this county. It commences near Andover in Hants, croſſing the Wiltſhire Downs, entering Somerſet near Bath Hampton; taking a weſtward courſe and then a north-weſterly one, ſo as to make a circuit around Bath,

traverſing the hills by S. Stoke, Engliſh Combe, Stanton Prior, Compton Dando, Norton Malreward and Long Aſhton to the Briſtol Channel at Portiſhead. The ancient camps on Bath Hampton Down, Stantonbury Hill near Stanton Prior, and Maes Knoll near Norton Malreward, are juſt on its line. Maes Knoll, on the Somerſet ſide of Briſtol, for a thouſand years has, like a geological boulder, kept its place, although its companions have ſuccumbed to fate and time. Its derivation is decidedly Keltic; and the fact of its defenſive character is proved by the exiſtence of the old earthworks and other remains found in its vicinity. Maes ſignifies an "open place" or "field," and the word is found in combination with other names of localities: Maes-teg, Tyn-y-maes, Maes-y-erugian are examples. The combination of the two words maes-knoll may inform us of the place having been held by ſucceſſive owners; Brendon Hill is another illuſtration of the ſame fact of a place having three changes of inhabitants to whom the older name ſucceſſively loſt its ſignificance—Bren the Cymric, Dun the Keltic, and Hill the Anglo-Saxon.* Archbiſhop Trench in one of his works

* *Vide* I. Taylor's *Words and Places*, p. 224.

inſtances Wanſbeckwater, a ſtream of Northumberland; Wans, water; the ſecond German, *bech*, a brook, from Bach; the laſt Engliſh, water.

Tradition ſays that Maes Knoll was formed from the ſcrapings of a giant's ſpade. Shall we ſay that the meaning has reference to ſome conquering hero, perhaps the Lord of Avon, the maker of theſe earthworks? In ancient times Vincent (the Latinized form and embodiment of the Belgae, the diſplacers of the Gaels), the Lord of Avon, contended with Gorm for the poſſeſſion of the valley of that river. Vincent, however, was victor, for Gorm tripped in his flight like Enceladus,* his bones forming Brean-down and the Holmes. His chair is ſtill preſerved in the grounds of Blaize Caſtle. And while beholding the rugged faſtneſſes of Clifton-Hill-Fort-Cloſe and Maes Knoll, we are inclined to think that ſome germs of hiſtorical truth lie hidden in the ſtory of the giants. We have yet the river Avon (Afon) flowing tranquilly by the rocks of Vincent,

> "Maintaining ſtill its ſtream,
> Swelled with glories of the Roman name;
> Strange power of fate! Unſhaken moles muſt waſte;
> While things that ever move for ever laſt."

* Virgil: *Æneid*, lib. iii, 578.

And here I would remark with the learned author of *Rude Monuments* that it is curious that Maes How, in Orkney, ſhould bear the ſame relative poſition to the Standing Stones of Stennis that Maes Knoll does to the group of circular ſtones of Stanton Drew. In theſe ſtrongholds we have the veritable fortreſſes of a race, ſtrangers though they were, whom ſubſequent generations raiſed into the Olympus of their crude oral myths. On the hill-tops, giants rolled about the rocks and played at quoits; from this we may deduce the thieviſh and cruel propenſities of rude marauding chiefs, dwelling in the midſt of a weak and inoffenſive people. Have we not in theſe hill fortreſſes and hut villages which lie below, the very materials out of which have been developed the mythology we now poſſeſs?

Norton Malreward (mal, a hill; rhiew, a ſlope; and ard, a height, the hill of the high ſlope), crowned by Maes Knoll, has had a ſingular derivation aſcribed to it. It is ſaid that when Sir John Hautville (whoſe deſcendant I have the pleaſure of enumerating among the number of my ſubſcribers) received the manor from the Conqueror, he deſpiſed the gift, ſaying,

"Mal reward! an ill guerdon for my exploits." I am of the opinion that Malreward is a corrupted form of ſpelling for ſome old family name; for, as a rule, in double names of places the name of the family follows that of the place, *e. g.*, Combe Florey, Norton Fitzwarren, etc. Of this knight it is recorded that he was the ſtrongeſt man in thoſe parts; he went up the tower of Norton Church, with a man under each arm and one in his teeth. The two former made ſome reſiſtance, and were immediately ſqueezed to death; the other, rendering no doubt paſſive obedience, was preſerved. Hautville's Quoit, apparently a cromlech, was by this ſturdy knight thrown from Maes Knoll, a tradition ariſing from the fact that Sir John held land from the Knoll to the land containing the cromlech. This valiant hero, although originally buried in Norton Hawkfield Church, has found a reſting-place—at leaſt his monument of Iriſh oak is in the church of Chew Magna.

Near the Quoit is the village of Stanton Drew* (the Durocaſſium of the Latins, and the "In monte

* For a learned inquiry into the origin of these ſtones, *Vide Rude Stone Monuments*, by Dr. J. Ferguſſon, pp. 148-154.

quod dicitur Agned" of King Arthur, where his twelfth and crowning victory was fought), the hut village near the water, where are alſo the "ſtantes lapides" (erected probably by Hubba*), the old, true witneſſes of times long fled, immortalized by fame, by tradition, by proſe, and by verſe. The pretty little poem by the Miſſes Coates, the production of two ſiſters, is well worth peruſal, but unfortunately ſpace prevents me quoting the legend as related by them. I will tell it as briefly as poſſible.

It is, that at ſome unknown period, on a Saturday evening, a recently married pair, with their friends and companions, met on the ſpot now covered by theſe ruins, to enjoy themſelves and to celebrate their nuptials. Here mirth prevailed, and they, lightly tripping over the greenſward, wiled away the night; the clock was on the point of ſtriking the hour of midnight, when the piper refuſed to play. This was againſt the wiſh of the bride, who being very fond of dancing, and not wiſhing to be thwarted of her purpoſe, ſwore an oath that ſhe would go to the unmentionable regions to find a fiddler. Preſently an

* Vide *Rude Stone Monuments.*

aged man appeared and offered his ſervices, which were gladly accepted. The old gentleman, whoſe name I hardly need mention, commenced playing a ſlow and ſolemn air, which did not pleaſe the company, who, requiring ſomething more lively, expoſtulated. Thereupon, being favoured with their requeſt, they danced right merrily; but, alas! as the performer played ſo they were impelled around him. In vain they eſſayed to ſtop; but no, they only moved the faſter—the fiend in the meanwhile having reſumed his own ſhape ſo well known by repute. Cries for mercy were unheeded, until the firſt glimmering of day or the ſhrill ſound of the cock warned the unwelcome fiddler to depart, which he did, ſaying, "I leave you as a monument of your wickedneſs and my power." The villagers in the morning found the meadow ſtrewn with the ſtones, and the wedding party transformed from men and women into a ſterner ſubſtance.

Max Müller ſays that modern traditions have everywhere cluſtered round thoſe curious ſtone circles. Being placed in a circular order, ſo as to make an area for dancing, they were naturally called Dawn's-men, *i. e.*, dancing ſtones. This name was ſoon cor-

rupted into dance-men, and a legend ſprang up at once to account for the name. Another corruption of the name into Danis-men led to the tradition that theſe circles were built by the Danes.

I may add that Robert of Brunne calls this circuit of ſtones a karole. It would be intereſting to know if this word is derived from the Latin chorale or corolla,* the diminutive of corona. This legend is common to all nations. The Romans and Greeks had Orpheus, who made inanimate objects to follow in a circle when he piped.† Orpheus is ſuppoſed to mean the light of the ſun: ſentient beings rejoice in his influence.

Watchet.

THIS pariſh is ſo named from a certain ſaint (S. Decuman) who lived in the ſeventh century, and fixed his abode in this place, near the ſite of the preſent church, which ſtill bears his name. Of him many ſtories are related, the principal of which are that he

* Heſychius makes the Greek χορός, a dance, equivalent to κύκλος, a circle.

† Euripides: *Iphig. in Aul.*, 1213; Æſchylus: *Agam.*, 1260.

was drifted over from Wales acroſs the Channel on a bundle of rods, and was nouriſhed by a cow, which of her own will followed him whitherſoever he went. At the time of his martyrdom a miracle happened. A pagan inhabitant came behind him as he was at his devotions and ſevered his head from his ſhoulders (A.D. 706); the head was by the body conveyed away and waſhed in a ſpring in which he was accustomed to bathe. His feſtival was commemorated on the 27th of Auguſt.

A ſtory is ſtill told in this place of the mother of Sir John Wyndham, who, being ſuppoſed dead, was buried alive in the vaults of S. Decuman's. Happily for her, the ſexton, hearing ſome noiſe, as he ſhut the door, was attracted by it. Liſtening, he diſcovered whence the ſound came, opened the coffin, and to his utter aſtoniſhment beheld the lady alive.*

This ſtory is alſo told with other variations, one ſtating that Mrs. Wyndham being buried in her jewels and ornaments, her grave was rifled, and ſhe came to life by receiving a cut on her finger. A ſimilar ſtory

* *Vide* Collinſon, iii, 490; and the *Beauties of England and Wales*, vol. xiii, pp. 578-9.

now raiſed in a legend ſtill exiſts among the Ruſſians; by the kind permiſſion of the writer I am enabled to quote it from the *Cornhill* (1872).

"The ſchoolmaſter of a certain village happened to be paſſing the church one night when he fell in with a dozen robbers.

"Do you know," ſaid they, "whereabouts the rich lady lies who died in your part of the world laſt week?"

"Yes, I know. They buried her in the crypt."

The robbers threatened him with a ſharp knife, and compelled him to go along with them. When they came to the crypt, they took the iron grating out of the window, and lowered the ſchoolmaſter through it by means of their ſaſhes, ſaying—

"Open the coffin, take off the lady's ſeven rings of gold ſtudded with precious ſtones, and bring them here."

The ſchoolmaſter lifted up the coffin-lid, and began taking the rings off the dead woman's hands. Six of them he got off eaſily, but the ſeventh he couldn't manage. She had doubled up her finger, and wouldn't let the ring go. He told this to the robbers; they flung him a knife, and cried—

"Cut off her finger, then!"

The ſchoolmaſter picked up the knife, but the moment he cut off the finger — that very moment the dead woman awoke, as if from ſleep, and cried aloud with a terrible voice—

"Brothers and ſiſters! Ariſe quickly and help me! No reſt had I during my life, and now will they let me have none, even immediately after death!"

At the ſound of her voice the coffins burſt open, and the Dead began to come forth. The robbers heard the noiſe they made, and fled; the terrified ſchoolmaſter ran up the ſtaircaſe leading from the crypt, ruſhed into the church, hid himſelf in the choir, and ſlammed the door to.

After him ruſhed the Dead. Seeing where he had hidden himſelf, they began dragging up their coffins and piling them one on top of another, ſo as to be able by their help to climb over into the choir. Meanwhile the ſchoolmaſter, who had found a long pole, began pulling the coffins down with it. In this ſort of work he ſpent the time till midnight. But when twelve o'clock ſtruck—the Dead took down their coffins and went back into the crypt.

The ſchoolmaſter was left more dead than alive.

Next day he was found in the church terribly ill, an utterly broken man. The prieſt came, heard his confeſſion, and gave him the Sacrament. Soon after that the ſchoolmaſter expired." *

Wells.

THERE remain yet (in the time of Queen Elizabeth), writes Harrington, in the body of Wells Cathedral, about thirty feet high, two eminent images of ſtone, placed there as is commonly ſuppoſed by Biſhop Burnell, the builder of the great hall, in the reign of King Edward I. One of theſe images repreſents a king crowned; the other is of a biſhop mitred, in all proportions reſembling Henry VIII, holding in his hand an infant in the act of falling: the biſhop is ſurrounded with a woman and children. The old men of the city had a tradition, that when there ſhould be ſuch a king and ſuch a biſhop, then the Church ſhould be in danger of ruin. The falling

* *Vide* Afanaſief's *Collection of Ruſſian Popular Tales (Narod nuiya Ruſskiya Skazki)*, vol. viii, p. 392. Moſcow, 1863.

child, they ſaid, was King Edward VI; the biſhop, Doctor Barlow, the firſt married Biſhop of Wells, and probably of England. It is aſſerted that this interpretation being rife at Wells in Queen Mary's time, the prelate choſe Chicheſter rather than this dioceſe. And certainly if all that is related of him in the *Iuſtorum Semita* be true, he was certainly very ſacrilegious; for we read that, being appointed to the ſee of S. David, he did all that was in his power to render the epiſcopal palace uninhabitable. He ſtripped off the lead both from it and alſo from one of his manorial caſtles, and ſold the metal for his own benefit; and on his elevation to the ſee of Bath and Wells, he reduced the revenues to one-half. On the acceſſion of Queen Mary he fled to Germany, but on the eſtabliſhment of the Proteſtant religion in 1559 he was appointed to the ſee of Chicheſter. He had five daughters, all of whom he married to Proteſtant biſhops. As an inſtance of the intimate connexion between the love of religious novelty and the love of church plunder, this pious biſhop was accuſed before Cromwell, Earl of Eſſex, of publicly teaching doctrines utterly deſtructive of the firſt principles of

the Chriſtian faith;* and this, too, in the ſame year (1536) when he was tranſlated from S. Aſaph's to S. David's.

Paſſing from the pillars to the tombs of this cathedral church, we find that many miracles were wrought at the ſepulchre of William Button, or Bitten, the ſecond biſhop of that name who had ſat in the epiſcopal chair (1267). Perſons afflicted with toothache reſorted hither, and it is ſaid that the ſufferers by his interceſſion were healed. Even in his lifetime he was regarded as a man of great ſanctity; for when Robert Kilwardby, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, obtained permiſſion of the Pope to ſelect his own conſecrator, he ſelected this holy prelate, aſſigning as the reaſon—"Quod fama ſanctitatis inter cæteros nullum efflorebat." At the tomb alſo of William de Marchia (1293), who was buried between the door of the cloiſters and the altar of S. Martin, many extraordinary cures are recorded as having been wrought.

I might here remark that a peculiar incident occurred in 1596. It is given by Warburton, who

* See Strype's *Eccles. Mem.*, 1536; and Dugdale's *Monas.*, Wells and S. David.

quotes it from Iſaac Caſaubon: "This day the Lord Biſhop of Ely (Dr. L. Andrewes), a prelate of great piety and holineſs, related to me a wonderful thing. He ſaid he had received the account from many hands, but chiefly from the Lord Biſhop of Wells, lately dead (Dr. J. Still), who was ſucceeded by the Lord Montacute; that in the city of Wells, about fifteen years ago (1596), one ſummer's day, when the people were at divine ſervice in the cathedral church, they heard, as it thundered, two or three claps above meaſure dreadful, ſo that the whole congregation, affected alike, threw themſelves on their knees at this terrifying ſound. It appeared the lightning fell at the ſame time, but without harm to any one; ſo far, then, there was nothing but was common in like caſes. The wonderful part was this, which afterwards was taken notice of by many, that the marks of a croſs were found to be imprinted on the bodies of thoſe who were then at divine ſervice in the cathedral. The Biſhop of Wells told my Lord of Ely that his wife (a woman of uncommon probity) came to him and informed him, as of a great miracle, that ſhe had then the mark of a *croſs* impreſſed on her body; which

tale when the Biſhop treated as abſurd, his wife expoſed the part, and gave him ocular proof. He afterwards obſerved, that he had upon himſelf, on his arm (as I take it), the plaineſt mark of a ✠. Others had it on the ſhoulder, the breaſt, the back, or other parts. This account that great man, my Lord of Ely, gave me in ſuch a manner, as forbade me even to doubt of its truth."

Matthew of Weſtminſter narrates a ſimilar occurrence happening in the year 790. He ſays that the ſign of the croſs was ſeen on the garments of ſeveral men, and it was regarded as a warning for the nation to avoid the infliction of the Danes.

Wokey Hole.

THIS noted cavern has given birth to as many fables and traditions as the Sibyl's Cave. The ſtories have their origin in the petrifactions which preſent ſingular forms. I have taken the liberty to inſert the following from Percy's *Reliques** to illuſtrate them:

* *Vide Reliques of Ancient Engliſh Poetry* (1765), vol. i, p. 310.

"In aunciente days tradition ſhowes
A baſe and wiked elfe aroſe,
The Witch of Wokey hight;
Oft have I heard the fearfull tale,
From Sue, and Roger of the vale,
On ſome long winter's night.
Deep in the dreary diſmall cell,
Which ſeemed and was ycleped hell,
This blear-eyed hag did hide:
Nine wicked elves, as legends ſayne,
She choſe to form her guardian trayne,
And kennel near her ſide.
Here ſcreeching owls oft made their neſt,
While wolves its craggy ſides poſſeſt,
Night-howling thro' the rock:
No wholeſome herb could here be found;
She blaſted every plant around,
And bliſterd every flock.
Her haggard face was foull to ſee;
Her mouth unmeet a mouth to bee;
Her eyne of deadly leer.
She nought deviſ'd, but neighbour's ill;
She wreak'd on all her wayward will,
And marr'd all goodly chear.
All in her prime, have poets ſung,
No gaudy youth, gallant and young,
E'er bleſt her longing armes;
And hence aroſe her ſpight to vex,
And blaſt the youth of either ſex,
By dint of helliſh charms.
From Glaſton came a lerned wight,
Full bent to marr her fell deſpight,
And well he did, I ween;
Sich miſchief never had been known,
And, ſince his mickle lerninge ſhown,
Sich miſchief ne'er has been.
He chauntede out his godlie booke,
He croſt the water, bleſt the brooke,

Then—pater noſter done;
The ghaſtly hag he ſprinkled o'er;
When lo! where ſtood a hag before,
Now ſtood a ghaſtly ſtone,
Full well 'tis known adown the dale:
Tho' paſſing ſtrange indeed the tale,
And doubtfull may appear,
I am bold to ſay, there's never a one,
That has not ſeen the wretch in ſtone,
With all her houſehold gear.
But tho' this lernede clerke did well,
With grieved heart, alas! I tell,
She left this curſe behind:
That Wokey nymphs forſaken quite,
Tho' ſenſe and beauty both unite,
Should find no leman kind.
For lo! even as the fiend did ſay,
The ſex have found it to this day,
That men are wondrous ſcant:
Here's beauty, wit, and ſenſe combin'd,
With all that's good and virtuous join'd,
Yet hardly one gallant.
Shall then ſich maids unpitied moane?
They might as well, like her, be ſtone,
As thus forſaken dwell.
Since Glaſton now can boaſt no clerks;
Come down from Oxenford, ye ſparks,
And, oh! revoke the ſpell.
Yet ſtay—nor thus deſpond, ye fair;
Virtue's the gods' peculiar care;
I hear the gracious voice:
Your ſex ſhall ſoon be bleſt again,
We only wait to find ſich men,
As beſt deſerves your choice.

I have now come to the concluſion of my little work, which I hope will prove acceptable to my

readers. By the deſire of a friend and helper,* I have included in this volume a liſt of Somerſetſhire Proverbs. My taſk and pains will be well rewarded if my attempt at collecting theſe little ſtories meet with approval. In the words of an antiquarian I will take leave of my readers—

"Certe mî ſat erit præſenti ſcribere ſæclo
Auribus et patriæ complacuiſſe meæ."

* The Rev. R. A. Taylor, M.A., late of Hertford College, Oxford, who, while theſe pages were in the preſs, died at Norton Malreward Rectory, Somerſet, June 24, 1876.

Proverbs.

A blind horſe is no judge of colours.
A child may have too much of its mother's bleſſing.
A fair offer is no cauſe of feud.
A fool's bolt is ſoon ſhot.
A king's face ſhould give grace.
A lie hath no legs but it hath wings.
A man may love his houſe well without riding on the ridge.
A ſcalded cat fears cold water.
As proud go behind as before.
A whet's no let.
Better do a thing than wiſh it done.
Better unknown than ill known.
Common fame is ſeldom to blame.
Counſel is never out of date.
Diet cures more than doctors.
Do in hill as you would do in dale.
Drawn wells are ſeldom dry.
Eaſt—weſt, home is beſt.
Every cloud hath a ſilver lining.
Every door may be ſhut but death's door.
Fools grow without watering.
Forewarned forearmed.
Froſt and fraud both end in foul.
God helps them that help themſelves.
God comes with leaden feet, but ſtrikes with iron hands.
God cures, and the doctor gets the credit.
God tempers the wind to the ſhorn lamb.

Good mind, good find.
Good ware makes good markets.
Great barkers are no biters.
Harm watch, harm catch.
Haste makes waſte.
He who ſays what he likes ſhall hear what he does not like.
He who ſerves God ſerves a good maſter.
Honeſty is the beſt policy.
Liars ſhould have good memories.
Like father like ſon.
Little ſtrokes fell great oaks.
Man's extremity God's opportunity.
Man propoſes, God diſpoſes.
Men apt to promiſe apt to forget.
New light comes through the cracks in the tiling.
No man hath a worſe friend than what he brings from home.
No mill, no meal.
No pains, no gains.
No ſweat, no ſweet.
Patience and perſeverance will carry a ſnail to Jeruſalem.
Pithy ſayings are the edge tools of ſpeech.
Prayer and provender hinder no man's journey.
Puniſhment is lame but it comes.
Old ſparrows are ill to tame.
Out of debt out of danger.
Safe bind ſafe find.
Sit in your own place and no man can make you riſe.
Slow help is no help.
Tell the truth and ſhame the devil.
The goat is ill ſaved which ſhames its maſter.
The haſty hand catches frogs for fiſh.
The horſe which draws its halter is not quite eſcaped.
The more the churl riches he wretches.
The nobleſt vengeance is to forgive.
The tongue is not ſteel but it cuts.
The way to heaven is by weeping croſs.
"They ſay ſo" is half a liar.
Three can keep a ſecret when two are away.

'Tis good to be well, but 'tis better to end well.
To carry care to bed is to ſleep with a pack at your back.
Truth may be blamed, but cannot be ſhamed.
Too far eaſt is weſt, *i. e.* extremes meet.
What the eye doth not ſee the heart doth not rue.
When the miſt is on the hill, there runneth water to the mill.
Where the bee ſucks honey, the ſpider ſucks poiſon.
Who goes a borrowing goes a ſorrowing.
Who ſwims in ſin ſhall ſink in ſorrow.
Wide will wear, but light will tear.
Wild oats are a ſure crop and a big yield for the ſeed.
Win purple, and wear purple.
Women's jars bring men's wars.

Notes.

RHABDOMANCY.

(Pages 44—47.)

The following may not be without ſome intereſt to my readers. It appeared in *Nature*, January 6th, 1876, p. 200.

"Anthropological Inſtitute, Dec. 28, 1875.—Miſs A. W. Buckland read a paper on divination by the rod and by the arrow. The author endeavoured to prove:—1. That from perſonal obſervation, rhabdomancy is ſtill practiſed in England in certain localities, and that it is a ſurvival of a very ancient ſuperſtition originating in the uſe of rods as ſymbols of power. 2. That the ſtaff as a ſceptre was probably a later form of the horn which was thus uſed in very early prehiſtoric times, and in that character adorned the heads of gods. 3. That from the uſe of rods or horns aroſe a veneration for them as poſſeſſing the inherent power of healing diſeaſe and even of reſtoring life. Hence their uſe by magicians in all ages and countries, the chief inſtruments employed by them being a ring or circle, and a ſtaff and a bifurcated ſtick. 4. That theſe ſymbols conjoined are found in Egyptian, Aſſyrian, and Peruvian ſculptures, and may be traced in ſome of the ſtone circles of Britain, and in the ſhape of Iriſh and African brooches and fibulæ. 5. That from the belief in the magical powers of rods perhaps aroſe tree-worſhip, or at leaſt ſuch veneration for trees as is obſervable of

the oaks of Dodona and of the Druids, the aſh of Scandinavia, and, for ſome unexplained reaſon, more particularly of the hazel. 6. That belomancy, or divination by marked arrows, ſaid to be of Scythic origin, was practiſed in Babylon, Judæa, and Arabia, and that traces of it may ſtill be found in the folk tales of Ruſſia and Siberia. 7. That the mode of uſing theſe arrows had a ſtrong reſemblance to the very ancient cuſtom of caſting lots common to all peoples ancient and modern. 8. That the invention of lots and dice, as well as that of the divining rod, is aſcribed to Hermes or Mercury, identified with the Woden of Scandinavia, and by ſome writers alſo with the Indian Buddha. 9. That a ſtrong reſemblance exiſts between the implements of magic and the ancient alphabets, alſo the reputed invention of the ſame god or gods. 10. That many of the ſigns or letters forming the Archaic-Phœnician, and other alphabets, are found in the rock ſculptures of Peru, thus adding one more to the many proofs of a communication exiſting between the hemiſpheres in prehiſtoric times. 11. That the arts of magic and divination were not of Aryan origin, but remnants of the Turanian or Pre-Aryan faith which once overſpread the world. 12. That this is proved by their preſent exiſtence among aboriginal non-Aryan races, and may, perhaps, even be uſed as a teſt of race, ſo that thoſe who in Somerſet and Cornwall are ſaid to poſſeſs the power of divination by the rod may poſſibly have ſome remote affinity with the aboriginal inhabitants of Britain."

GLASTONBURY.

(Pages 82—93.)

I have received from a friend the following extract from the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, Nov. 27, 1875, containing an inquiry by Dr. Phené into ſome Arthurian ſtories.

"A ſpecimen of Pirus, or, as it is more correctly written, Pyrus cordata, was lately ſubmitted to us for identification under ſomewhat

peculiar circumſtances. It is not often that archæology and botany unite, though, as ſhown in the articles on 'The Apple of Literature,' on April 10th and 17th laſt, they are ſeen to do ſo in the caſe of the apple. In the preſent inſtance an archæologiſt—Dr. Phené—viſited Brittany, to trace practically any connection—if ſuch could be found—between the legends which connect the 'Iſle of Apples' of Arthurian repute with that locality, and thoſe which connect it with Britain. King Arthur, it appears, is ſuppoſed to have been buried in the Iſland of Avalon (Glaſtonbury) in England, and in that of Aiguilon in Armorica, the equivalent of Iſle of Avalon being Iſle of Apples. An Iſland in Loch Awe, in Argyllſhire, has a Celtic legend containing the principal features of Arthurian ſtory, but in this caſe the word is 'berries' inſtead of apples. Theſe particulars were fully given in a paper read on 10th June laſt, by Dr. Phené, before the Royal Hiſtorical Society, in which he expreſſed a belief that the legend of the myſtical Arthur was derived from the character of Arjuna given in the Indian poem *Mahá Bhárata*. After cloſely examining the iſland in Loch Awe and Avalon in Somerſetſhire, he concluded his reſearches by a viſit to Armorica. He there obſerved a tree which helped him to the apples of Avalon and the berries of Loch Awe, for the apples on the tree were berries. The ſpecimen he has ſubmitted to us is the Pyrus cordata of Deſvaux, figured in Decaiſne's *Jardin Fruitier du Muſeum*, t. i, p. 330, tab. 3; and it is intereſting to note, in ſupport of Dr. Phené's argument, that it has been found in Weſtern France—perhaps in South-weſtern England, if, as we ſtrongly ſuſpect, the plant found by Mr. Briggs near *Plymouth*, and called by Dr. Boſwell Syme 'Pyrus communis var. Briggſii,' be the ſame [ſee *Journal of Botany*, 1871, pp. 181 and 215]—and nowhere elſe in Europe. Both countries had their weſtern ſhores occupied, anterior to the invaſion of the Cymry, by a peculiar race of people having ſtrong Oriental characteriſtics, and which people ſome authors deſcribe as occupying the country as far north as Argyllſhire—the evidences of ſuch occupation having been laid before the Britiſh Aſſociation at Briſtol, in September laſt, in Dr. Phené's paper on that ſubject—'while the ſame tree is found on Mount Elbrus in north-eaſt Perſia (according to Boiſſier, *Floral Orientalis*, vol. ii, p. 653—a country not remote from that which formed the arena of Arjuna's exploits, and whence it would ſeem to have been imported to the weſt of Europe.'

"Pyrus cordata forms a ſpiny ſhrub or tree with tortuous branches,

ovate acuminate, finely-toothed glabrous leaves, and ſmall apple-ſhaped fruits, about the ſize of hawthorn berries, borne on long ſlender pedicels. In Brittany wild pears, and this among the number, are known under the name of Beſi or Beſizolle, whence the name Beſi, applied to certain cultivated pears. P. cordata may very probably be the origin of certain early apple-ſhaped pears. *Its geographical diſtribution in Perſia and in Weſtern Europe was inexplicable, but now ſeems to be reaſonably accounted for.*

"The connection of the apple with the necromancer, Merlin, is more captivating than anything in even Arthurian ſtory, and is as follows. Merlin ſays in one of his ancient poems, 'I have 147 apple trees of great beauty, the branches of which are covered with verdant leaves, the ſhade is delightful, as well as the fruit, and its protection is confided, not to a dragon, as in the garden of the Heſperides, but to a charming youthful girl with flowing hair, and with teeth brilliant as pearls amid roſes.'—*Myviriam*, t. i, p. 151."

NORTON MALREWARD.

(Page 119.)

My ſurmiſe reſpecting the origin of Malreward being a corrupted form of ſpelling is well founded, and I am glad that my opinion is confirmed and corroborated by a letter (from which I extract) which I received from the learned author of *Engliſh Surnames* (The Rev. C. W. Bardſley, M.A.).

"The Malrewards came in with the Conqueror or thereabouts. The mere name ſignifies evil glance. The word was originally Malregard. The Norman G often becomes W in Engliſh. Hence we have the two entries—William Malregard, which occurs in *Rot. Finium in Turri Londinenſi*, and Geoffry Malreward, which may be ſeen in the *Placitorum in Dom. Cap. Weſtminſter*. Similar ſurnames are found at the ſame period,

e.g. Mal-enfant (bad child), Mal-main (evil hand), Mau-lovel (bad little wolf), Mal-voiſin (bad neighbour), Mau-clerk (bad ſcholar), &c. Any Hiſtory of Somerſet I imagine would give the family hiſtory of the Malreward or Maureward, or more correctly Malregard Family."

However, the ſingular derivation of Malreward (ill guerdon) which I have given is not without its parallel, for in Holy Scripture we find Hiram, King of Tyre, giving a ſimilar name to the territory which Solomon gave him—in this caſe the name Cabul or Chabul marks diſpleaſure, or ill regard (1 *Kings* ix, 13).

"Go, little booke, God ſend thee good paſſage
And ſpecially let this be thy prayere,
Unto them all that thee will read or hear,
Where thou art wrong, after their help to call
Thee to correct in any part or all."—Chaucer.

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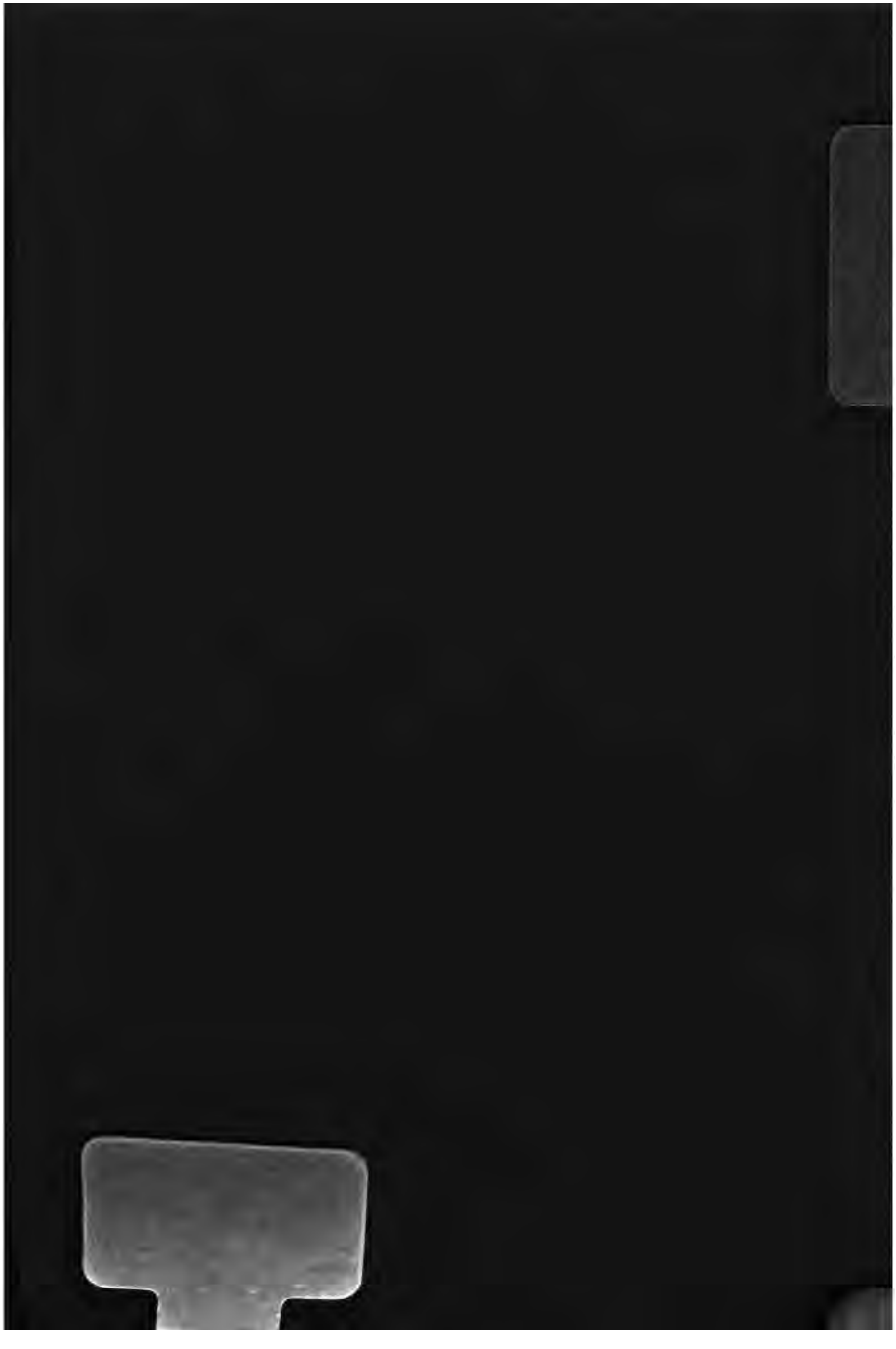
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